BUSINESS / B1
VAT collections up 65% to P103.75B but BIR misses 9-month target slightly

ENTERTAINMENT / F4
Reese Witherspoon, Ryan Philippe separate after 7 years of marriage

WORLD / A20
US wants North Korea Six-Party Talks to resume as early as possible

SPORTS / A23
Bulls douse cold water on Heat celebration; Lakers triumph

Luli comes to defense of Pinoys in Naia queue

By Nikko Dizon

THE USUALLY LOW-KEY FIRST DAUGHTER questioned an immigration officer who had allowed a foreigner to jump the line of passengers waiting to be checked in at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport yesterday afternoon, according to a source at the Naia.

But the clueless officer did not recognize

(CONTINUED ON A4)

PHILIPPINE DAILY
INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

Thursday, November 2, 2006 ★★ 6 sections / Vol. 21 / No. 327 P18 newsinfo.inq7.net

Should we Cha-cha or not? GMA allies want answer

By Philip C. Tubeza and TJ Burgonio

SHOULD THEY OR shouldn't they?

President Macapagal-Arroyo's allies in the House want her to say whether they should or

(CONTINUED ON A4)

Hunger hits record high

Foes fear Palace won't submit deal to Senate

By Blanche S. Rivera and TJ Burgonio

CRITICS OF AN ECONOMIC agreement with Japan fear that Malacañang would not submit it to the Senate for ratification amid snowballing protests against the inclusion of hazardous waste in the deal.

Akbayan counsel Tanya Lee, whose group has been following the Japan-Philippines Economic Partnership Agreement (JPEPA) negotiations since last year, said Malacañang could invoke its powers and have the Department of Foreign Affairs declare the deal an executive agreement that does not need the Senate's assent.

The DFA is the government agency authorized to declare an agreement an executive agreement based on certain requirements set by the Supreme Court or a treaty. If it is a treaty, it would have to be submitted to the Senate for ratification. If not, the agreement takes effect immedi-

FOES FEAR A6

AND NOW FOR THE GOOD NEWS: President Arroyo at a press briefing in Hong Kong says that she expects the peso to continue to rise.

SWS: 2.9M families have nothing to eat

WHILE MANY FILIPINOS ARE GROWING obese, the incidence of hunger in the country is back to a record high, with 2.9 million families finding themselves with nothing to eat at one time or another in the third quarter of 2006, according to a survey by a nongovernment polling group.

Results of a survey conducted by Social Weather Stations showed that 16.9 percent of some 17.4 million households were hungry at least once over the past three months. A household has about five members.

The record was first reached in March, but the figure dropped to 13.9 percent in June.

Hunger was highest in Mindanao at 21.3 percent in September, SWS said.

The incidence of hunger declined in Metro Manila (from 23 percent in June to 12.8 percent in September) but rose in the rest of the country: The rest of Luzon (from 10 percent to 14.7 percent), the Visayas (from 17.7 percent to 19.7 percent) and Mindanao (from 17.3 percent to 21.3 percent).

The SWS survey, conducted from Sept. 24 to Oct. 2, covered 1,200 households (300 each from Metro Manila, the rest of Luzon, the Visayas, and Mindanao). It has a margin of error of plus or minus 3 percentage points for national data and plus or minus 6 percentage points for regional data.

While the incidence of hunger

HUNGER A6

WHEN THE SAINTS COME MARCHING IN. the party begins. There's singing, so much to talk about, the catching up on each other's lives, games galore, a feast spread out on hallowed ground—the typical scene at all cemeteries. (Story in Metro, Page A11; more photos on Page A8.)

. . . But GMA sees 6.5% growth in '07

HONG KONG—THE PHILIPPINE economy is set to accelerate next year and the peso still has room to rise, President Macapagal-Arroyo said Wednesday.

Ms Arroyo forecast economic growth of between 5.5 and 6.5 percent in 2007, up from a government estimate of 5.6 percent or more growth this year and 5 percent in 2005.

The peso on Monday hit its highest level in more than four years at 48.75 to the US dollar due to heavy remittances from overseas Filipino workers. The currency, however, closed at 49.040 to the dollar on Tuesday. Manila's financial markets were closed Wednesday in observance of All Saints' Day.

Still, Ms Arroyo said she expected the peso to continue to strengthen, but she didn't say by how much the currency would appreciate further.

"I think it can rise more," she said at a press conference in Hong Kong after attending a summit in China with the Association of Southeast Asian Nations.

While importers were benefiting from the stronger peso ear-

...BUT? A6

THE BUSINESS OF DYING

A last rites company, other new services leave grieving in peace

SPECIAL REPORT

By Tina Arceo-Dumlao and Margie Quimpo-Espino

THE MULTIBILLION-PESO industry of providing services to the dead has spawned more businesses and promises of millions more in earnings for the living.

One is the life plan business, which eventually crossed the pre-need industry. This involves purchasing a plan which will take care of the services one will need at death—the mortuary, the transport that will bring the coffin to the cemetery.

Albert T. Alba, Prudentialife president and vice president of the Philippine Federation of Life Plan Companies Inc., says 13 companies are now selling life or memorial plans.

Prudential Life Plan Inc.'s packages range from P23,000 to almost P400,000 depending on the type and the payment terms, from one to five years.

Life plan packages now include traditional burial or cremation.

Alba says only about a million Filipinos have life plans which means the rest of the 85 million or so will have to shell out money to go six feet under. This can range from P5,000 to over P1 million.

The huge earnings from this industry is proven by big businessmen who have gone into the business.

Taipan Alfonso Yuchengco and other businessmen have set up the Manila Memorial. A few years ago, the Aliws of Pradera

A-LIST A4

FLORAL OFFERING from Abigail Antonio, 4, at the Columbary of Santa Nino de Cebu on Visayas Avenue, Quezon City.

Funeral landscaping: From fishpond to love birds to bagpipe music

By Amy R. Remo

HOW SHE WOULD YOU GO to give the best to your departed loved ones?

While families find it such a painful task to plan and arrange for interment and funeral rites, most want to make these events as memorable as they can be.

After all, this will be the last time they can express their love for their departed before sending them off to their final resting place.

While wakes are usually held in a funeral parlor or at home, with glaring lights and towering wreaths, the memori-

FUNERAL A6

Korean looks for family who hid dad during WWII

By Yolanda Sotelo-Fuertes
Inquirer Northern Luzon

STA. BARBARA, PANGASINAN—South Korean Park Duk-shin has a mission in the Philippines: To look for the family that sheltered his father during World War II.

His father, Park Jung-suk, was a second lieutenant in the Japanese Imperial Army because, at that time, Korea was under Japan. He was a "deserter" who refused to fight alongside Japanese soldiers.

Park, 64, said that when he was a boy, his father regaled him about his experiences in the Philippines and about a kind farming family that took care of him for three months after he left his military unit.

"He was fighting for the Japanese but he did not want to fight the Filipinos. So he decided to hide and that family took him in," said Park, a businessman who operates a language school in the

KOREAN A2

WEATHER FORECAST

Second FRONTPAGE

Palace vows to thrash opposition at '07 polls

By GIC. Cabacungan Jr.

CLAUDIO

MALACAÑANG YESterday gave fair warning to the opposition that it would use its superior political machinery in the May 2007 elections, whether sectorial or parliamentary, to avenge the administration's initial setback in the Charter change campaign.

In a text message to reporters, Cabinet Claudio, the presidential adviser for political affairs, said the opposition and other anti-government forces would get their comeuppance either in the next election or in a plebiscite on Charter change, if and when it is allowed.

"What has the election season been about in parliamentary, the administration will have the advantage of a nationwide political machinery eager for mobilization or campaign," he said.

He said that in the May elections, the local officials and the organizations in the people's initiative would not hesitate to show which displeasure or those who backed the Senate-initiated federalism and parliamentary system would be rewarded with projects and development through constitutional reforms."

Claudio also accused the opposition of hampering almost nonstop Cabinet members and the President's political allies in the wake of the defeat of the people's initiative to amend the Constitution.

"There's obviously a conscious effort to sow intrigue and foment conflict and division within the administration. It's very rude. It's a conscious attempt at disinformation and intrigue meant to cripple the resolve of the administration to pursue Charter change or erode its strength in the coming elections," he said.

He said that even after the Supreme Court decision rejecting the people's initiative petition, the always

HARVEST TIME. After raising their dogwood trees here on Mt. Samat ridge, farmers in Candon City, Ilocos Sur intend to store farm. It is the peak of the palay harvest season all over the country. (STORY ON PAGE B1, PHOTO BY JOVEN CAGUIOA)

SC: RTCs can't rule on Customs seizures

By Leila B. Salaverria

REGIONAL TRIAL COURTS CANnot rule on the validity of the forfeiture of contraband and other dutiable goods in seizure and forfeiture proceedings, a task reserved for customs officials and the Court of Tax Appeals, the Supreme Court said.

In an Oct. 19 decision, the high court also dismissed the petition of Atty. Norma Cabochan (ATI) seeking to reverse a Court of Appeals ruling upholding the Bureau of Customs' dismissal of ATI's complaint to contest the case between the government and the importer of seized right-hand drive boxes that were being stored in the ATI warehouse.

The ATI asked the Pasay City court to admit its complaint-intervention and order the immediate payment of some P12.8 million, plus legal interest, its accumulated storage and service charges and other fees.

The customs bureau, under the provisions of Republic Act 8800 banning the importation of right-hand drive vehicles, seized 1,000 units of the cars from Japan in 1999. The BOC impounded the vehicles, ordered them stored at the ATI warehouse and set their public auction later that year.

The importers then filed before the RTC a petition for replevin, or the return of the goods, against the Bureau customs and the national commissioners.

The RTC granted the petition for replevin and ordered the seized boxes transferred to its custody. The Bureau of Customs and the customs bureau questioned the order on the ground that the RTC had no jurisdiction over the seized vehicles.

The lower court agreed it had no jurisdiction and dismissed the case, ordering the boxes returned to the custody of the BOC. Leila Salaverria

Solon seeks end to bitter Cha-cha debate

By Jaime Laiog Jaemillano

STOP THE DELUGE CHARTER change debate first, Ralph Recto, who chairs the Senate committee on trade and finance, says he has the solution to untangling the feuding executive, legislative and judiciary branches of government together.

Recto, who is married to economist and Liga City mayor Vilma Santos, says that instead of pursuing the highly divisive and costly revision of the Charter and the options of a people's initiative, the administration should instead build a modern, government-wide railway. Meandering, the Senate, the House of Representatives and the judiciary will be housed in one centralized complex.

Only the officials of the three branches of government in one center—somewhere near the Mind of Asia fronting the Manila Bay—would foster a more harmonious relationship among the President and the Cabinet, the senators and congressmen and the justices of the courts, said Recto, who has a degree in business administration from the De La Salle University and representative of the country to the World Social Democratic Congress.

"If I were the President, I would like to have this legacy which will benefit the Executive, Congress and the judiciary and the people," said Recto in a phone interview.

Recto said the concrete gridlock between the Senate and the House, one of the main reasons cited by proponents of Charter change, was exacerbated by the present setup, where the Senate and House have different office spaces: the relatively new Senate building in Pasay City while the House is Administrative Complex in Batasan, Quezon City.

This is not only hard for legislation but have also been responsible for friendships and camaraderie among the lawmakers, he added.

"Senators don't know all the congressmen as one you imagine if we are in one building or adjacent to each other. It would be easier to talk to each other. There would be a lot of personal interaction which is good for legislation," he said.

He pointed out how President Manuel Quezon made frequent visits to Congress during the commonwealth era.

"I don't even think Malacañang should be doing the Ding Dong," he said.

As to the "ideal place" for the future government center, Recto said the UMC-Mall of Asia reclamation area is the perfect spot. "But the Public Estates Authority still has huge areas in the reclamation area so I think that would be a good place where you can also have a lot of open spaces and parks."

Recto said earlier plans to move the government offices to Clark in Pampanga might not be wise considering that "Manila is the political and infrastructure capital of the country."

"Government centers could bring in tremendous savings in the long run and would be cheaper than the administration's present effort to amend the Charter through the doomed people's initiative and the costly and time-consuming Congress into a constituent assembly, he said.

"It would also be easier for the people to lobby Congress, ask money from the Executive and follow up cases in the judiciary. They could have as one all-stop Metro Manila where transacting business with the government," Recto continued.

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Japan to hire up to 10,000 seamen in next three years

By Jerome Aning

JAPAN'S EXPANDING SHIPPING INDUSTRY will be looking for up to 10,000 merchant marine officers in the next three years, according to Labor Secretary Arturo Brion.

Brion, who also attended a shipping industry conference in Japan last week, said the Japanese hoped the Philippines could supply 6,000 of the 10,000 officer positions in about 1,000 new ships expected to be constructed.

The problem is that while there are many Filipino seafarers, not enough are qualified to be officers, Brion said. Philippines need for the Japanese maritime industry but 60 percent of them are not even college graduates.

The labor secretary said short- and long-term measures would be formulated by the government and the local manning industry to ensure more Filipino seafarers are enrolled marine officer training.

Brion said among the immediate measures to solve the depletion of officers was the holding of mid-in evening at the Professional Regulatory Commission for various licensure exams. Shortening seamen who are ratings or junior officers usually have to wait months before they can take the necessary exams.

The Secretary also said local shipping could avail of exposure to such Japanese vessel to speed up the training of Filipino seamen offered by. Long distance learning modules would be adopted so that they can do not assignment while on sea.

Teodoro Quijano, president of Stolts International, a Manila-based manning agency, said many Filipino seamen are content to be second officers and often opt to resist the next step in their manning journey for their families.

Brion said he has been discussing with Quijano and other manning agents how to persuade seafaring to endorse and their seamen, not just as a money-making job but as a lifetime professional career.

"The challenge is to change another which says that seamen should be changed," Quijano said, adding that since Filipinos live to see as seafarers, they have a natural affinity to the sea.

Solon seeks end to bitter Cha-cha debate

By Jaime Laiog Jaemillano

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Security tightened for OFWs

By Jerome Aning

THE EMPLOYERS OF FILIPINO WORKERS caught in the midst of sectarian clashes in Kandahar has set up new security measures to protect them, the Bethlehem Camp, and ensure safe transit for their safety and exit, if, to leave, according to a report from a Philippine official.

There are about 450 Filipinos working in Bethlehem in the United Arab Republic's flight, scheduled area which has been plagued by mortar rain.

Labor Attaché Basilio de la Puente said a new security set-up was being implemented by Bethlehem in the wake of the recent attacks. "We should not settle to keep those who do not want to the company's ability to ensure them."

"The OFWs are to decide whether they will accept it and stay or go to safer areas. Their concerns and request repatriation," De la Puente said in his report.

He said the OFWs who have been evacuating their relatives in the Philippines that they found for them from should be the first to be repatriated.

A final list of those who have opted to remain and those who wanted to be repatriated today.

Forty workers were killed and 300 injured in the clashes between Kandahar and Bethlehem last Oct. 28.

De la Puente said Filipino workers were treated well as a matter part of the United Company in Bangkok following the clashes.

The attacks said he has learned both the attack rifle and the shooting village of the Philippine workers and found the situation there stable. The Filipinos have not yet returned to work but communication is smoother now between Philippine labor and diplomatic officials are with representatives from Bethlehem and the Kandahar government in the Kandahar capital of Almany Lesi Mandoy to discuss the safety and security of the workers.

The government dispatched to Kandahar in the South Arabia based De la Puente and a Philippine consular team headed by Ambassador to Pakistan Jaime Pardines and Consul General Agnes Locsin to monitor the OFWs.

BADAWI

Malaysia assures RP of support to end Moro rebellion

NANKING, CHINA—MALAYSIAN PRIME Minister Abdullah Ahmad Badawi said Thursday his country would continue to support Manila in its efforts to resolve a dispute with Moro rebels in the south.

Abdullah said he had discussed the rebellion by the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) in a bilateral meeting with President Macapagal-Arroyo on Monday on the sidelines of a regional summit here.

"She's very committed to find a solution to the problems in the southern Philippines and she has asked that we continue to help, that we continue to be engaged in this special mission that we call (the) international monitoring team," Abdullah told reporters.

"We continue to exchange our views on various strategies that has been adopted, and I see a commitment on our part to find a solution to this problem," he said.

"We will continue to help whenever we are called upon to do so."

Malaysia leads an international team of monitors observing a ceasefire accord between the MILF and Manila signed in 2003.

Malaysia has also been hosting and conducting peace talks between Manila and the 12,000-strong MILF, rebels has been fighting for almost three decades to set up an Islamic state in the southern Philippines.

The negotiations are currently deadlocked over economic control demanded by the MILF over so-called "ancestral domains," villages and hamlets in Mindanao it claims on historical grounds.

Giving the sensitive nature of the talks, Abdullah declined to reveal further details of the discussion with Ms Arroyo, but said Malaysia wanted to see a resumption of talks.

"We want to see that negotiations ... start again...It's important that we continue to talk, that we continue to negotiate," he said. AFP

Gov't considers dropping murder rap vs MILF chief

THE GOVERNMENT IS CONSIDERING dropping a murder complaint against the head of the separatist Moro Islamic Liberation Front for a deadly bombing as it seeks to keep peace talks from breaking down, a top official said on Tuesday.

Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita told reporters that Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez has ordered a review of statements by arrested suspects who linked Al Haj Murad (in the Oct. 19 blast that killed six people in Sta Cruz, Zamboanga del Sur province, after Armed Forces Chief Gen. Hermogenes Esperon said there was no evidence to link Murad to the bombing.

Ermita said that in the past, an arrest warrant for Murad's predecessor, the late Hashim Salamat, was reviewed and lifted after it became a stumbling block to peace talks.

"The Department of Justice is following the same procedure, reviewing the affidavits already given [to] find out whether the statements really point to the involvement of the leadership of the MILF," he said. "There is such intervention already."

In the murder complaint, police said they suspected Murad, several MILF commanders, Indonesian terror suspects Dulmatin and Umar Patek, and a Pakistani national of plotting the bombing.

MURAD

MILF vice chair Ahmad Abdul Aziz Alimbon has called the complaint "an act of hostile provocation whose dire consequences will widen the existing cleavage between the MILF and the Philippine government."

Ermita said the government was also concerned about recent skirmishes between government forces and MILF guerrillas, and is working in earnest that mechanisms to implement a 3-year-old ceasefire agreement "prevent a total breakdown or derailment of the talks."

The MILF on Sunday accused pro-government militiamen of attacking rebel positions in southern Maguindanao province, sparking a brief gunbattle that they say could further imperil the talks. It was the second alleged attack by government forces against the MILF in three days.

Ermita said the tension between the separatist rebels and the government has been growing since their Malaysian-brokered peace talks stalled in early September and police filed the murder complaint against Murad.

The MILF, which the Philippine military says has 11,000 men with over 8,000 firearms, has been fighting for self-rule in the southern Mindanao region for more than two decades. AP

Gov't troops nab Abu member who sneaked in terrorists into RP

TROOPS HAVE CAPTURED AN ALLEGED member of the Abu Sayyaf Group who allegedly arranged trips by Indonesian and other foreign terrorists to the Philippines for training and attacks, security officials said yesterday.

Ubaid Hayen was captured by military and police intelligence agents in Tawi-Tawi province several days ago after months of surveillance, two security officials said on condition of anonymity because they're not authorized to talk to the media.

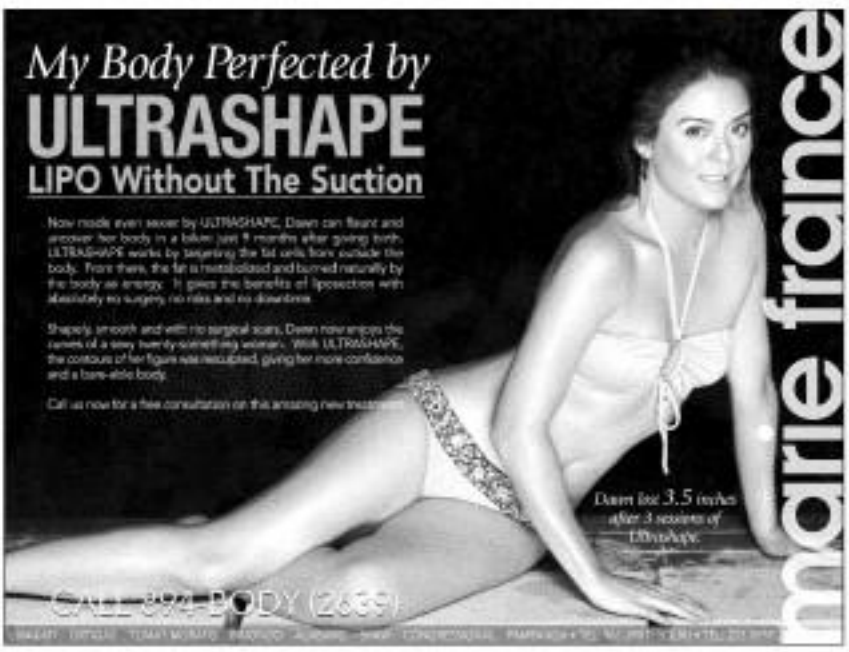
Hayen has provided crucial details to military interrogators about the al-Qaida-linked Abu Sayyaf and its operational links with other Filipino Muslim and Indonesian terror groups, one of the officials told the Associated Press without elaborating.

Hayen allegedly helped arrange for, sign (security) trips for Malaysian bomb-maker Zulkifli Abdhir, arranging them in perilous sea voyages to Jolo island, where Abu Sayyaf leaders and Indonesian terror suspects have been evading a months-long US-backed offensive, they said.

Last November, Hayen allegedly helped the group of Abu Sayyaf chieftain Khadafy Janjalani and two top Indonesian terror suspects—Dulmatin and Umar Patek—evade a major military manhunt in Maguindanao province by escaping to nearby Jolo in speed boats, the officials said.

Dulmatin, who goes by one name, and Patek are key suspects in the 2002 Bali nightclub bombings that killed 202 people.

Hayen is allegedly a key aide of Abu Solaiman, an Abu Sayyaf commander who has been charged in a number of bomb blasts attacks, including a February 2004



Hunger hits record high

[illegible]

ment, the number of families considering themselves poor declined. Fifty-one percent described themselves to be living in poverty, an improvement from the 55 percent the previous quarter.

The survey results indicate that while some families managed to retain the borderline of poverty, others besides began to suffer the deep deprivation of hunger," SWS said in a statement.

Severe hunger

The number of families who said they were experiencing severe hunger (going hungry often or always) rose to 8.6 percent (about 880,000 households) in September from 2.4 percent in June.

Households experiencing moderate hunger (those who had only occasionally come or a few times) rose to 12.3 percent, about 1.1 million households, from 10.1 percent.

Those who rated themselves poor rose in the Visayas, but declined in other areas, according to SWS.

Self-rated poverty went down in all areas except the Visayas. Here six percent of households in the Visayas said they were poor, up from 59 percent. Those who rated themselves poor declined in Metro Manila (from 54 percent to 46 percent), the rest of Luzon (59 percent to 45 percent) and Mindanao (from 51 percent to 33 percent).

Monthly budget

Despite the rising cost of living, the median self-rated poverty threshold, or the median monthly budget set by self-rated poor households "to escape poverty," declined in Metro Manila (from P15,000 to P13,000) and in Mindanao (from P6,000 to P5,000).

It remained at P6,000 in the Visayas and rose in the rest of Luzon from P5,000 to P6,000.

"Each income-value threshold were already attained some years ago, even though the cost of living increased greatly every year. Since the income cost of living is actually rising, a declining or unchanging poverty threshold means that households are lowering their living standards or belt-tightening," SWS said.

The percentage of Filipinos living above or growing.

The food and Nutrition Research Institute said that the prevalence of overweight children aged 0 to 10 years rose to 1.3 percent in 2003 from nearly zero in 1998.

In 2003, the National Nutrition and Health Survey found that 54 percent of women in the country were obese compared with 12.1 percent for men. Lawrence Casamiro and Cyril L. Bautchista, Inquirer Research

. . . But GMA sees 6.5% growth in 2007

[illegible] Ms Arroyo said the government was also sensitive to the plight of exporters whose goods had become less competitive with the rising local currency.

Government efforts to cut red tape, meet rubber-ring costs of expansion and helping offset the impact of the ruling currency, she explained.

BSP intervention?

Markets are on watch for possible central bank intervention to curb the strength of the peso, but Ms Arroyo would not comment on whether she expected the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas, which is independent of her administration, to intervene for the currency market.

"I can't tell the central bank governor what to do," she said, adding that she thought the BSP had been making the right policy choices for the economy.

In the same forum, Ms Arroyo said that Philippine trade with China was booming and there were many new opportunities for investment.

Annual two-way trade between the two countries was virtually nonexistent in 2001, she recalled, citing some $1 billion just to $9.817 billion.

"China has emerged as our No. 3 trading partner as a result of this very rapid increase in trade," Ms Arroyo said, adding that the Philippines' main exports to the Chinese included electronic components, minerals and tropical fruits.

The President said she hoped the economy would achieve sustainable growth of 7 percent a year by 2010. Pushing economic growth beyond 6 percent is seen as essential for curbing poverty.

Security situation

One factor that concerns investors and analysts, however, is the security situation in the Philippines, particularly in Mindanao.

PRESIDENT ARROYO leaves a press briefing as Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye (right) and reporters look on at a hotel in Hong Kong on Monday. Ms Arroyo arrived in Hong Kong after attending the China-Asean summit in the Chinese city of Nanning. AFP

Ms Arroyo was dealt another setback when Malaysian-brokered peace talks between her government and the separatist Moro Islamic Liberation Front stalled in early September. The MILF has been fighting for self-rule in Mindanao for more than two decades.

But the President said she was still confident the government and the MILF would reach a lasting peace settlement despite current differences over the size and wealth of a proposed homeland for about 3 million Muslims in Mindanao.

"We've had a ceasefire for three and a half years now. It's been working very well," she said. "It makes me optimistic that we will have a just and lasting peace in Mindanao."

While holding peace talks with the biggest Moro rebel group, however, the Arroyo administration is waging its all-out war against communist guerrillas.

Charter change

Another concern of foreign investors is the Arroyo administration's bid to bring about a shift to a parliamentary government from the current US-style two chamber legislature.

At the same forum, the President insisted that her reform campaign wasn't dead. She said the legislature needed to be charged because it was too prone to gridlock that was weighing down the country.

"Here the rest of the world is moving so much faster. We have to move faster," she said.

Even so, Ms Arroyo admitted there was an immutable reform: the congressional changes might be realized.

The President suffered a blow last month when the Supreme Court threw out a petition she had supported to change the Philippine Constitution and overhaul the political system through a people's initiative.

Critics say Ms Arroyo is promoting changes in the Constitution to stay in power after 2010, when she completes her six-year presidential term. Reports from Reuters and AP

Luli comes to defense of Pinoys in Naia queue

[illegible] Evangeline Lourdes "Luli" Arroyo, and even demanded that she wait, said the source, who asked not to be identified for lack of authority to speak out to the media.

The officer, who was later identified as Nijjar Fadlan, is now on "floating" status, the source said.

Luli, accompanied by her sister Lourdes, Gabal Alcantara's wife, and the latter's young daughter, was on her way to Hong Kong to join her parents, President Macapagal-Arroyo and Jose Miguel Arroyo.

This was how the source recounted the trio's ordeal:

The Arroyos were making in line at the Bureau of Immigration's special lane for diplomats and VIPs when Luli saw that the foreigner had cut the line and the immigration officer had started processing his travel documents.

Luli went over to the officer and asked why he had allowed the foreigner to get ahead of every one else.

Why Filipinos?

To the surprise of onlookers, the officer snapped at Luli: "Hindi ka ba marunong maghintay (Don't you know how to wait)?"

The source said Luli was "obviously pissed" and was heard retorting: "Bakit barong mga Pilipino ang pinagtatrabahuan mo (Why are you yelling at Filipinos)?"

LULI ARROYO: Why not scold the foreigner?

Why not the foreigner?"

This was how the source told the rest of the story:

The immigration officer's colleagues quickly tried to get his attention to subtly tell him that he was talking to the First Couple's only daughter.

Eventually, the officer's superior responded to and explained to Luli that the foreigner was late for his flight and that his papers had to be expedited.

Luli replied that that was all she was waiting for—a proper explanation to the other passengers standing impatiently.

"It actually looked like a scene from a gag show. He was completely clueless who Luli was. Supposedly, he even said Luli that she shouldn't be in that line because it is only reserved for diplomats and VIPs," the source said.

And where was Luli's show-to-

guards from the Presidential Security Group the entire time?

According to the source, Luli always tells her PSG guards to keep their distance and let her do things on her own as she has pride in suffering in line, checking in and carrying her bags.

'Unacceptable' incident

The immigration officer has been temporarily relieved of his post at the airport, BI-Naia head supervisor Ferdinand Zaspal told the Inquirer.

He said Immigration Commissioner Alipio Fernandez had ordered an investigation of the incident.

"Ang nangyaring hindi maganda (Something unpleasant hap-

pened). It was unacceptable. Immigration officers should not be rude or arrogant to any passenger, whether they are members of the First Family or regular people," Zaspal said.

He said the BI "wants to know what happened because in fairness to our immigration officers, he's a seasoned (chief member) and this is the first time such a thing happened to him."

Zaspal also said that among the things to be investigated was whether the foreigner was indeed late for his flight, which was purportedly why the immigration officer processed his travel papers ahead of the others waiting in the special lane, including Luli Arroyo.

Should we Cha-cha or not? GMA allies want answer

[illegible] shouldn't Cha-cha.

With time running out on the 48-day filing period for signatures supporting the Charter change, House Majority Leader Prospero Nograles said yesterday said Ms Arroyo should decide whether the chamber should "proceed [with] or postpone" the convening of a constituent assembly.

Nograles made the remark in response to Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita's advice on Tuesday that the House ought to get clear on its plan to convene a constituent assembly by itself.

According to Nograles, Ermita's advice is confusing because the House majority apparently has enough votes to proceed without the Senate's participation in Charter change. Congress is in preparatory to a shift to the unicameral parliamentary system.

"I hope our administration allies do not give us this line and this kind of mixed signals as we have to consolidate," the House majority leader said.

"Let us be clear on our side," he said. "So maybe the President should clear the air and tell her allies in Congress to proceed or postpone ... If she leaves it up to us, we will proceed."

But Nograles said the House majority would first hold a caucus to reach a consensus on the matter.

"Then I will suggest that House leaders meet the President and her key people in the Cabinet so we can sing one song. Nobody sings out of tune," he said.

No more time

Earlier, Nograles warned that there would soon be no time for the Charter change campaign with the political parties starting to get busy preparing for the 2007 national elections.

He said that by the month, political parties would be in the thick of conventions to choose their local and national candidates.

Run on the same day that Ermita aired his advice, Cagayan de Oro City Commission-hotels, audience of one of the two House resolutions seeking the convening of a constituent assembly, said he did not expect anything substantial to happen when Congress resumes its session on Nov. 6.

Asked if his resolution committing his proposed constitutional amendments would be tackled by the plenary next week, Jaraula said without elaborating: "We could discuss it in plenary, but believe me, there would be nothing spectacular. It will be an ordinary session."

Ask SC

But even then, Milagros Debuenos-Jaraula, a staunch ally of Ms Arroyo, said House leaders should ask the Supreme Court early on in a petition for declaratory relief to determine the constitutionality of their plan to convene a constituent assembly.

In so doing, the House leaders will avoid a long legal battle on the issue, Jaraula said in a phone interview.

"They will be stopped in their tracks if they proceed unilaterally to anyway. The Supreme Court will throw the whole's again," she said.

Jaraula said that after the issue had been cleared and the House subsequently passed in plenary its resolution convening Congress into a constituent assembly, the congressmen could proceed with the amendments without having to worry about legal and constitutional questions.

"[The constituent assembly] then becomes a simple case of amendment without any of the parties going to the Supreme Court," she said.

However, Jaraula said parties opposed to the planned constituent assembly could seek the same relief early on.

"I'm urging both camps to do the same," she said.

The rules on declaratory relief state that any person, whose rights are affected by statute, executive order, regulation, ordinance or any other regulation, may bring an appropriate action before a regional trial court to determine the validity of his/her rights or duties.

House v. Senate

House leaders believe that they can convene Congress into a constituent assembly on their own as long as they can muster the required votes (equivalent to three-fourths of all members of Congress).

The Senate disputes this view, and maintains that both chambers should vote separately on any amendments in a constituent assembly.

Sen. Franklin Drilon has even voiced out that the Senate would object if the House asked the Commission on Elections to conduct a plebiscite.

In fact, Richard Gordon's opposition, Senate leaders should not press ahead with their plan and spare the high court another lengthy deliberation on such an issue.

"Those who are interested in pursue Charter change in the House may well do so, but they must be wary of their move. They cannot do it alone. They have been told of the legal infirmities of their plan and they have to pursue a constituent assembly without the Senate. They should not insist on doing something that is unconstitutional," Gordon said yesterday in a statement.

"All they need to do is heed sound legal advice. We should at the very possible avoid pulling the Supreme Court into this fray to correct grave abuse of discretion as there grave abuse of discretion as there is already among the members of Congress," he said.

Gordon, who chairs the committee on constitutional amendments and has engaged his House counterpart in a short-lived dialogue on how to go about the amendments, said that "every time we go on a protracted legal battle, we waste time, money and talent."

"Unnecessarily, it is our country that suffers," he said.

'Voice of wisdom'

House Deputy Minority Leader Alan Peter Cayetano described Gordon's go-slow advice as the "voice of wisdom from an administration bereft of it."

Cayetano said Malacañang was "closely monitoring the people's sentiment" and had "observed that the people were very happy" with the Supreme Court decision last week dismissing the administration's initiative to amend the Charter.

Cayetano pointed out that Chief Justice Artemio Panganiban and the seven other justices who voted for dismissal had been "heralded as heroes and patriots."

"Thus, it is clear to the Palace that the vast majority of the people are against the manner in which Cha-cha is being railroaded," he said.

Cayetano said Malacañang should now focus on reforms that could be implemented under the Constitution, like electoral reforms and improving public education, health and employment.

"If all energy, money and resources are directed in reforms rather than Cha-cha, the people may start supporting this administration's projects. After all, we're stuck with this government until 2010," he said, adding:

"People are through the plan to keep [Ms Arroyo] in power beyond 2010. And that seems even some of her allies as they have learned from history."

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Thursday, November 2, 2006
All Souls Day

1st Reading: Wis 3:1-9
2nd Reading: Rom 6:3-9
Gospel: Matthew 25:31-46

Jesus said to his disciples, "When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all his angels, he will sit on the throne of his glory. All the nations will be brought before him, and as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats, so will he do with them, placing the sheep on his right and the goats on his left.

"The King will say to those on his right: 'Come, blessed of my Father! Take possession of the kingdom prepared for you from the beginning of the world. For I was hungry and you fed me, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, a stranger and you welcomed me, naked and you clothed me, ill and you cared for me, in prison and you visited me.'

"Then the good people will ask him: 'Lord, when did we see you hungry and get you food, thirsty and give you drink, as a stranger and welcome you, naked and clothe you? When did we see you sick or in prison and go to see you?' The King will answer: 'Truly I say to you, whatever you did for one of these least ones who are my brothers and sisters, you did for me.'

"Then he will say to those on his left: 'You, cursed people, out of my sight, into the everlasting fire which has been prepared for the devil and his angels! For I was hungry and you did not give me anything to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me nothing to drink; I was a stranger and you did not welcome me into your house; I was naked and you did not clothe me; sick and in prison and you did not visit me.'

"They, too, will ask: 'Lord, when did we see you hungry, thirsty, naked or a stranger, sick or in prison, and did not help you?' The King will answer them: 'Truly, I say to you: whatever you did not do for one of these, the least of my sisters and brothers, you did not do for me.'

"And these will go into eternal punishment, but the just to eternal life." Gospel of the Lord

We are told of the promise that assists those who are faithful, who endure, and are last on earth. We will shine like sparks that ignite another soul that will penetrate the truth, knowing God's mercy and grace in each moment of our lives. Christ has freed us from sin and death, and for us and with us so that we might be reconciled and live in God, now and forever. Jesus prays to the Father, linking us to our righteous efforts for love in God and how we can live in God and Him and the Spirit, everyone. Let us pray that this wisdom will be shared with us, and we will be united to one another and to God here and hereafter.

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2 OFWs detained for bullet amulets

THROUGH THE EMBASSY of the Philippine Embassy in Brunei, an overseas Filipino worker was given a more "favorable" jail sentence while another was able to altogether avoid confinement.

In two separate occasions, the OFWs were caught by immigration officers at the Brunei international airport for possession of bullets.

The Department of Foreign Affairs withheld the names of the OFWs who kept the bullets in their wallets.

Possession of ammunition carries a penalty of five to 10 years in prison in Brunei, the DFA said in attachment materials.

However, one of the OFWs was sentenced to only six months' imprisonment after the embassy's intervention "resulted in the amendment of the charge to ... negligent possession of ammunition and thus [entailed] a more lenient imprisonment sentence," the DFA said.

The OFW was released in August after airport authorities found the bullet during a routine search by dogs at the Brunei International airport.

The OFW had just finished his two-year employment contract and was on his way home to the Philippines when he was arrested.

The Brunei government, on the other hand, granted an appeal made by the embassy on behalf of another OFW who was arrested last Oct. 6.

The OFW was en route to Dubai, United Arab Emirates, to work as a domestic helper when airport authorities found the bullet in her possession.

The OFW claimed that the bullet was a lucky charm that she said helped her get pregnant two years ago, the DFA said.

The case appears lenient, withdrawn by the public prosecutor and she is now at the Filipino Workers' Resource Center visiting her jailed detainee.

From there, she would proceed to Brunei's work.

Airlines and immigration experts prohibit air travelers from carrying bullets, whether live rings or empty shells, on board the aircraft. —Nikko Dizon

UST Law alumni at Intercon

THE UNIVERSITY OF Santo Tomas College of Law Alumni Foundation Inc. will hold its homecoming celebration on Nov. 25 at the Intercontinental Hotel in Makati City.

Lawyer Emelio S. Rebecchi said the Intercontinental Guild of Alfredians of Class 1956 and Silver Jubilarians of Class 1981 is the reunion which starts at 6:30 p.m.

The theme of this year's [illegible] anniversary of the Faculty of Civil Law is "Morality, Law and the Democratic Lawyer," Rebecchi said.

For details, call Rebecchi at 893-8288/8925 and 897-521/1099, or Marisa at 900-6888 local 8081.

Esperon bares overtures from detained officers

By Dona Pazzibugan

TASK OF THE ARMY AND MARINE officers implicated in the February coup plot tried to avoid court-martial by appealing to the military leadership.

But Armed Forces Chief Gen. Hermogenes Esperon Jr. said he rejected the overtures from the officers whose names he did not reveal.

It is Esperon who will decide which of the 26 officers from the Army's elite Scout Rangers and the Marines will be tried before a military court as recommended by military investigators and prosecutors.

Esperon said attempts were made to talk to him but that he had suspected such contacts were.

Earlier, Esperon said he feared there will be a "very difficult" parting because of his ties with some of the accused.

The highest ranking of the detained officers is former Marine commandant Brig. Gen. Ernesto Mercado, Esperon's classmate at the Philippine Military Academy Class 1974.

"Gen. Mercado was my roommate for one year at the PMA. But that should be no reason at all why I cannot objectively decide on the matter," he said.

The alleged principal instigator of the February coup plot by way of a withdrawal of support from President Macapagal-Arroyo is Senator Scout Ranger commander Brig. Gen. Danilo Lim who served under Esperon when the AFP chief headed the Special Operations Command.

Esperon earlier said Lim's watered-down declaration of withdrawal of support from the President was "inconvenient for evidence" against him.

The rest of the accused include three colonels led by Marine Col. Ariel Querubin, nine lieutenant colonels, five majors, nine captains, nine first lieutenants and one second lieutenant.

Esperon said he leave his decision to convene a general court-martial "could mean an end to someone's career."

"We have to be careful," he said.

A pre-trial investigation panel had work recommended a court-martial for some of the 26 accused, saying there were enough evidence of their involvement in the "aborted mutiny."

Esperon has said "one or two or more" may be spared from court-martial.

The AFP chief said he would like to make submission within the month.

He said he has been going through the 200-page report of the investigating panel even as Mr. Deff Judge Advocate, Col. Pedro Bitonio Dardia, is still reviewing it.

Lim and 24 Scout Ranger officers linked to the Feb. 24 coup plot are being detained in a maximum detention facility in the Army's Camp Capinpin, Tanay, Rizal.

The Marine officers were being detained at a staff house in Bonifacio Naval Station in Fort Bonifacio, but Querubin and five other colonels and lieutenants originally were ordered taken to the Fort San Felipe naval detention facility in Cavite City but Sanchez Mercedes in the "dilapidated facility."

Mercado and the rest of the accused Marine officers remain confined at the naval staff house.

"There might be a need to consolidate them in one place. We're studying that," Esperon said.

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Foes fear Palace won't submit deal to Senate

Front page A1

study Lat said.

"If many changes local policy and effectively overwrites previous legislation. That's why you need the Senate to exercise and approve it," said Lat, a trade lawyer.

No difference internationally

She said internationally there was no difference between a treaty and an executive agreement. "But in domestic laws, there's a difference: A treaty must go through the Senate, but not an executive agreement," Lat said the lessons in an earlier interview.

"The executive is known to sign deals as a matter of fact," she said.

Pastor over JFK-Mo initiative of trade senators on the list of products that Japan could trade with the Philippines has been growing despite the Japanese Embassy's assurance that Tokyo's strict review, harvesting of trade controls would protect the illegal export of banned substances to the Philippines.

Opposition to JPEPA centered on the provisions proposing zero tariff on hazardous wastes. The agreement was signed by Ms Arroyo and then Japanese Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi on the sidelines of the Asia-Europe Meeting in Finland on Sept. 9.

Lat said the DFA, Office of Solicitor General and the Department of Trade and Industry had all declared that the JPEPA was a treaty that would have to pass the Senate.

"They said 'don't worry the Senate will protect your rights.' But that will not stop Gloria (President Arroyo) from saying it's an executive agreement. At the rate they're going, she'll try to go to court, and we don't want that to happen," Lat said.

As of last month, however, even the DFA was not sure whether the JPEPA would be considered either as an executive agreement or treaty, Lat said quoting Akbayan's concern in the agency.

"The thing here is they might make it an executive agreement which will not have to pass through the Senate, and that is our greatest fear now," Green Forum vice chief Mimi Jamco said.

Report bothers Miriam

Environmentalists have started lobbying senators on reject JPEPA. Mother Earth founder Odette Arcenas and Green Sail met with Senate President Manny Villar, Cebu solons' leadership of the House of Representatives Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo is usually an economic agreement with Japan because of its possible encouragement with an international convention banning the dumping of hazardous waste on Third World countries.

Santiago said Ms Arroyo should oversee the JPEPA in the wake of the statement of the Basel Action Network (BAN) that Japan had an invention of exporting a 1989 amendment to the Basel Convention.

The amendment bans the export of hazardous waste from Indian-related members of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development to non-members. BAN, an international monitoring group, said Japan continued to dump waste in countries like China.

"I'm bothered by the BAN report," Santiago said in a phone interview. She acknowledged that until BAN's statement appeared in the papers, she wasn't aware that Japan had not ratified a subsequent protocol to the convention.

Restudy proposed

"I did not realize that there will be a loophole," the senator said, adding that Japan might use this to go around the convention and "export its waste to us."

She said she will raise the Ms Arroyo should restudy the agreement when she rises to in Manila from a visit to China, according to Santiago.

"I hope the President will conduct a restudy of the matter from the standpoint of the protocol. We don't want to be outwitted in trade negotiations," she said. "Our job is to make sure that we have the facts concerning documents which require our approval."

Until BAN's disclosure, the senator acknowledged that she was initially "unperturbed" by the opposition to the agreement because she knew Japan was party to the convention.

Santiago also initially agreed with government officials' claims that the inclusion of wastes in the tariff reductions program of JPEPA was a "mere technicality."

"Now the argument that this is a waste we have idle wastes superficial," she said.

Santiago said she found BAN credible and described the group as "responsible" and "one of the watchdog compliances with the convention.

In view of BAN's statement, Santiago said she had reason to believe that the Cabinet did not "properly inform" the President of the protocol. "This fact was obviously during the decision-making process."

Committee hearing

Santiago said she would dig deeper into Japan's refusal to ratify the amendment to the Basel Convention at the upcoming inquiry into the agreement by the committee on foreign relations, which she chairs.

"We want to know the reasons why Japan refuses to ratify the protocol ... Whatever the reason, BAN has discovered a loophole that Japan might avail of," she said.

She said BAN representatives and officials of the departments of foreign affairs, and trade and industry would be invited to the hearing. The committee has no authority to compel Japanese Embassy officials to appear at the inquiry.

Santiago wants to convene the hearing immediately after Congress resumes session on Monday, but opined she is "unsure if the treaty has not been submitted to the Senate for ratification.

While she would want to oppose the President's economic program, Santiago indicated that backing that treaty would be a "difficult matter" in view of the loophole exposed by BAN.

Need for Senate ratification

Santiago also insisted that the treaty needed to be ratified by the Senate.

"The language of the Constitution on transnationalism gives the Senate exclusive power to ratify treaties and other international agreements. International agreements are usually all grouped as all agreements," she said.

Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita had released a memorandum to the President seeking her approval of a plan by the Department of Foreign Affairs to send the agreement to the Senate for ratification.

At the same time, Ermita said that the agreement had been "in force" 30 days after it was signed and that he would verify from Ms Arroyo if Senate ratification was still necessary.

THE CONVENIENCE AND COST are drawing more people in columbaria like this one, St. Therese of the Child Jesus

A last rites company, other new services leave grieving in peace

Front page A1

fields, one of the biggest promised firms in the country tied up with Manila Memorial in set up a mortuary within the cemetery grounds—the Funeraria. But in Secret.

Lucio Tan reportedly bought control into a the Heritage Park in Fort Bonifacio, which is owned by the Bases Conversion Development Authority.

Funeral coordinator

A Cebu-based funeral parlor, Cosmopolitan Funeral Homes Inc., owned by the Ryobangue family, has even franchised its mortuary business to Bik Kinchitor will be in Vietnam.

Recently, the industry even created funeral coordinators. The coordinators takes care of the many details of a memorial service and transporting a family member to the final resting place.

Last Rites Corp. was born out of the realization that families in grief did not have the heart nor the inclination to talk to different people about mundane details, such as dealing with the mortician, preparing food and drinks, building flames and sacrificial services and contacting the police that will escort the mishaps to the memorial park or columbarium.

"We started the business because we believe that people in grief needed more help than those planning weddings," says Last Rites partner Aivie Chingcuangco.

"So instead of them talking to so many people, they just talk to us about their plans and we take care of it," Chingcuangco adds.

Last Rites started last year. It is slowly making its presence felt in the market.

One of its most recent projects was the internment of the late actress Dhar Silayan.

Preparing music, speeches, etc.

"We helped with the music, the sequencing of the small speeches by her friends, we contacted the priests, we contacted the media to give the family some privacy took care of the press and the caterer," Chingcuangco says.

He says the biggest benefit is giving the family members the time and space to grieve, which they usually don't get. They have to handle all the details themselves.

From the interment, Last Rites has expanded its services to include servicing 40th and 100th-day observances, death anniversaries and even All Souls' Day observances.

And the families don't have to pay a very steep price for their peace of mind, Chingcuangco claims.

Last Rites' simple, 40th and 100th-day package runs P15,000, which covers the coordination with concerned establishments, delivery of flowers, supervision and direction of the event and handling of the guest book, food distribution and thank you cards.

The firm also has the same for a one-day interment package, which includes assisting the family during the last two days of the wake for follow-up and arrangements of late interment details.

For those who are ready to shell out P22,000, Last Rites provides four days of work, including their days as the wake and the day of the interment. The fee goes up to P32,000 for eight days of work, including the ninth-day observance, and then to P38,000 for 12 days, including the 40th day celebration.

The firm may seem new, but Last Rites' growing clientele shows that there are those who are willing to pay the price to be able to grieve in peace.

Funeral landscaping: From fishpond to love birds to bagpipe music

Front page A1

ist and burial services are slowly getting a facelift.

Would you hire a bagpiper to play a special hymn for your loved one as you send him to his grave?

Or, would you shell out for a landscaper to create for him that right ambiance?

For example, one of the more unusual requests that Charles Chua of Lipa Blooms funeral landscaping services received was to create an aviary setting for an interment, with love birds as its main feature. The one who requested the aviary said to be very fond of love birds.

Although this idea never pushed through due to time constraint and long dead concerns, Chua, whose family owns Lipa Blooms, believes that interest is indeed, considering the current trend in funeral landscaping.

"People who are prepared for the death of a loved one have a sense to do the service differently, more often because the person who is about to die has certain requests regarding his or her funeral," Chua said.

He says that his company has been into the landscaping business for more than a decade. But it was only this year that people started to ask if the company could do funeral landscaping.

Alternative idea

"I started to pick up in the sense that more people are considering it as an alternative idea for a funeral service," said Chua.

Lipa Blooms' offerings include creating floral sprays, floor decoration arrangements, setting up of interment, dressing up coffins, among others. Price varies, depending on what's demanded, from P15,000 to P90,000.

"You can have anything set up. You can get her or his simple as having orchids and garden setting at a funeral wake, or putting a grass beside the coffin, to something as elaborate as having a fishpond under the coffin. There are no parameters set standards," says Chua. "Choices are endless. The imagination may be your budget."

So far, Lipa Blooms has done four funeral landscaping services since January this year.

Chua says more people want to plan the interment so it will look serene, tranquil, as per wishes of the grieving family and guests despite the gloom.

"Filipinos are not that open yet to funeral landscaping but we believe it would pick up more and that it may even be a sustainable business, given the growing number of inquiries, requests and feedback we have gotten from our clients," says Chua.

Bagpiper for hire

Aside from Chua, there's the bagpiper for hire.

As the Philippines' first and only piper, Boy Macgregor Espino Espiritu says he is "just a musician like any other."

"It just so happens that the music of the pipes strikes an emotional chord in some people, making solemn occasions soft as funerals and weddings even more memorable," explains Espiritu. "People just like me when they feel they need me," he says.

"I price my listening at the music of Scotland and the Great Highland Bagpipes, you can get it free on me," says Espiritu, a Filipino of Scottish descent from the Macgregor of Sairn. "I've wanted to learn to play the pipes even as a kid," says Espiritu.

From memorial services at death anniversaries, the bagpipes express such intense emotions. They echoed in the closing services for Ronald Reagan, Princess Diana and the 9-11 victims.

From gate to grave

Playing the bagpipe for the public for five years now, Espiritu still doesn't think of it much as a business.

"It's more of a talking walk. Even though I price music here in the market (owned by a mix of bagpipe music, I still keep my rates affordable, as most people can enjoy the music of the Great Highland Bagpipe," says Espiritu. "Music is supposed to be shared."

Espiritu's repertoire includes many of the same popular tunes especially written for the Great Highland Bagpipes such as "Bonnie Dundee," "Amazing Grace" and "Auld Lang Syne."

"I usually play from the entrance to the funeral park to the gate. Leading the procession and then playing a couple of tunes at the graveside as the casket or urn is lowered into the ground," he says.

"If you're asking if I get enough gigs to support myself, clothe and feed my family, I still have a day job," says Espiritu.

But the service is there for the asking.

PAPA DIAL-SKIRS: His father dreamed the Japanese Imperial Army and was given station by a family somewhere in Bataan or Zambales.

Korean looks for family who hid dad during WWII

Front page A1

Subic Bay Freeport.

Park had shortly remember about what his father had told him. He said his father died in 1986. "Look for that family and help it."

Park said his father wanted to repay that family's kindness.

Afterwards, speaking in halting English and through interpreter Tae Hunsa-lee, Park said his father returned to South Korea in 1946 and became a successful businessman.

"Until his death, he kept repeating to me to go to the (Philippines) and look for that family. Or (if) won't do it, my son should do it," said Park, who was 18 when his father died.

He said his father singled him out among his four others siblings to undertake the "mission" because "if he was not able to return to South Korea, I would not have been born."

Park did not immediately come to the Philippines because he answered him-self in his country to make a living and engage in business.

Fruitless search

But his father's voice kept returning.

"Now I'm almost of retirement age so I decided to come to the Philippines to keep my promise," he said.

Park came here in 2000 and started looking for that family. But his search here was borne no fruit.

"Since I can't find the family, I am just helping Filipinos the best way I can," he said.

He is supporting the education of 40 high school and college students in Bambakan, all of whom were recommended by local officials and Church leaders.

He said he has also established a foreign language school at the Subic Bay Freeport that employs Filipinos as English teachers.

He said he was planning to establish a golf course, also in Subic, where Filipinos could be employed.

Park, who is among the sponsors of a local cycling event, has established residence in the country.

"(Filipinos) are very good people. The Philippines is a very good country. So I decided to stay here," he said.

Oil companies cut cooking gas prices by 56c/kg

OIL FIRMS TODAY... the cut primed liquefied petroleum gas by 56 centavos a kilogram, or P6.16 per 11-kilogram cylinder, to reflect the drop in the international contract price of the product.

The price reduction brings the price of the standard 11-kilogram LPG cylinder to between P644.84 and P646.64, inclusive of the 12-percent value-added tax.

Petron Corp., Philippine Shell Petroleum Corp. and Chevron Philippines Inc. slashed prices at 12:01 a.m. Total (Philippines) Corp. followed suit at noon.

According to data from the Department of Energy, the international contract price of LPC dropped about 20 per metric ton (MT) in October, bringing the October price to $460.06 per MT from $502.06 per MT in September.

The international prices of LPC had risen steadily since April, climbing from $426 per MT (last month) to $547 per MT in August. However, after surging by almost $14 per MT in September, the international contract prices of LPC (fairly) dropped in October, prompting oil firms to cut cooking gas prices by a minimum P0.56 per kilogram. Abigail L. Ho

KISS YOUR BAD BREATH, GOODBYE

Investors can now get visas on arrival here, says BI

By Leila Salaverria

INTERNS TO PHILIPPINES HAS SEEN made easier for investors with the immigration bureau's "visa on arrival" program for foreign businessmen.

Under the scheme, visiting businessmen need not secure a country visa from Philippine embassies in their home countries before coming here.

According to the Gen. PP memorandum by Immigration Commissioner Alipio Fernandez Jr., the businessmen can obtain visas which will permit them to stay in the country for as long as 30 days upon arrival at the Philippines.

But the foreign businessmen have to be endorsed by the local business community, including the Department of Trade and Industry, foreign chambers of commerce and the country's top 1,000 corporations, Fernandez said.

"The scheme is intended to attract our investment climate and attract foreign business," said Gary Mendoza, the immigration regulations chief.

It is similar to the visa-upon-entry privileges for Chinese visitors, which is designed to promote tourism.

According to Mendoza, the bureau still has to come up with the program's implementing guidelines before it can begin issuing the visas on arrival.

He said guidelines were necessary to ensure that only legitimate businessmen are made to benefit from the scheme and that they would return to their countries once their visas expire.

According to the fernandez memorandum, the endorsing body is required to give the ID to the names and birth dates of the foreign businessmen they are sponsoring at least 48 hours before their arrival.

This will give the BI enough time to notify the airlines concerned about the arrangement and to check the information against immigration records.

Businessmen availing themselves of the visa on arrival scheme will be charged $50 and a legal research fee of P1.5.

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OUR SUCCESSFUL EXAMINEES

REMEMBERING WITHOUT THE HASSLE: Columbarium-like structures at Arcadia Avenue, Quezon City are gaining popular acceptance in the wake for the commitment of the living. The price is also considerably lower than the trappings of a traditional funeral.

BURNING INCENSE for grandma in the way Rizal Pious, 7, honors her memory at the Loyola Memorial Park in Marikina.

PHOTO OP: At the (dangerously high) of the country's longest-serving foreign president of the United Nations. He

INSIDE the honeycomb, a woman prays the rosary for the eternal repose of a dearly beloved.

'A project design to bring down co of dying in Metr

By Norman Bordadora

SARI-TSINGCO IS CONSTRUCTING condominium-style buildings on a three-hectare land, hoping these will help developers in Loma Cemetery, which is located adjacent to his property, by having a huge inventory of crypts—some 80,000 of these when completed.

"This is a feel-good p at bringing down the co Metro Manila," says lawyer-contractor "Ther space in Manila's many d really since you have a there's a low supply. Ou up."

Manila North Green P built by Tsingco's com development firm, feat three-door condominium

FIRST CONDO-TYPE tombs at the Manila North Green Park in the North Cemetery utilizes a honeycomb-like architecture. The multistory niches can house 80,000 remains.

A PLAY OF LIGHT AND SHADOW at Barangka Cemetery in Marikina City on night falls.

IT'S SIESTA TIME for this woman with the wi her feet.

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placed on top of another. Tiongco says the structures are different from the "apartment-type" crypts in public cemeteries.

"The tombstones, the walls are made of granite," Tiongco says. He says his condominium are a first in the country (what), with his inventory of crypts, he hopes to make a dent in the huge demand for decent burial sites.

"We are building at a rate of 120 crypts a day. We already have 40,000 units available crypts," Tiongco says.

"A casket crypt goes for P17,000 to P22,000. Bone crypts go for P11,000," he adds. "We have terms. It can be payable in three years."

Technology from US, Canada

Tiongco got the idea and the technology of the condominium-type crypts in Canada and the United States. Still, similar crypts in North America were just one-story affairs and went for $30,000 apiece.

"Here we were able to double the unit to around $500," Tiongco says.

"When he showed the three-floor condos he built, his friends who give him the technology for building the crypts were amazed. 'Holy smokes! That's three floors,' Tiongco quotes one of his American partners as saying.

He says that even with the three stories, the crypt structures are quite sturdy and can withstand strong earthquakes. They also have an internal drainage system that leads to sewerage roads.

"No waste water goes to the city sewers," Tiongco says.

Only flowers allowed

To keep the corridors of the condominium-crypts clean, only flowers are allowed there. The crypts have a pair of cylinders—one on each side—for the flowers to be placed in. Candles are placed in steel receptacles in open spaces beside the condominiums.

"It's also gated. No vendors are allowed inside," Tiongco says.

He says he's encouraging other local government units and other executives to build similar structures in the capital region to further provide affordable yet decent burial sites in the long run.

"There is a need. And if you can do something to help, then you just do it," Tiongco says.

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PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

OPINION

Just delete it

EDITORIAL

IT WAS ALL A MISUNDERSTANDING. THE JAPANESE government said of the concerns raised by environmental groups over a new trade treaty that gives the green light for Japan to dump toxic wastes in the Philippines. The treaty signed last September by President Macapagal-Arroyo and then Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi and called the Japan-Philippines Economic Partnership Agreement (JPEPA) eliminates tariffs on all goods and services traded between the two countries, including waste materials. Its same sessions and religious leaders joined environmentalists in expressing alarm over the possible entry of toxic wastes, the Japanese Embassy in Manila released a statement Monday affirming their government's commitment to the "strict enforcement" of controls that would prevent "any illegal export of toxic and hazardous wastes to the Philippines." The statement said: "The government of Japan has an established legal framework based on the Basel Convention and has been enforcing strict import/export control, which does not allow any export of toxic and hazardous wastes to another country, including the Philippines, unless the government of such a country approves such export."

If the statement were meant to put the issue to rest, it doesn't. In fact, it would be folly for Filipinos to accept it at face value. Two key phrases in the statement are a dead giveaway. First, the Japanese government says it would prevent the "illegal export" of toxic and hazardous wastes. Then, it promises to bar the exportation of such materials, unless the government of the recipient country "approves such export." In other words, if there's a legal way to do it, Japan will send toxic materials to the Philippines. And while it claims to adhere to the Basel Convention, which basically bars developed countries from sending toxic wastes to less developed countries, it leaves the door open for such exports if another country like the Philippines approves their entry. If Japan truly has no intention of making the Philippines a dumping ground for its toxic wastes, it should have said so clearly, unequivocally and without qualifications.

Japan may have tipped its hand when it insisted, during the negotiations, that the JPEPA text an "all-or-nothing deal." That means that unless the provision allowing trade in toxic wastes was retained, there would be no deal on the 11,000 or so other items being produced by either countries.

It is hard to believe that our trade negotiators, led by Trade Undersecretary Thomas Aquino, didn't see through Japan's intentions. Instead, they have been trying to convince everyone that the provision on hazardous wastes is a harmless one, claiming it cannot be carried out without violating Philippine environmental laws.

But that is precisely the heart of the problem. Once the treaty is ratified and goes into effect, environmentalists fear it would supersede Philippine laws. "The JPEPA is a treaty that could well trump the national laws of the Philippines," said Jim Puckett, an officer of the US-based environmental group Basel Action Network. In other words, the treaty could give Japan a legal cover for the export of toxic wastes to the Philippines, regardless of our own laws prohibiting the entry.

It is beginning to look like some people are trying to bamboozle the Filipino people on this matter, and they are not just the Japanese. But if both Japanese and Filipino officials want to erase any doubt about the honesty of their intentions and the integrity of the treaty there is one simple and easy thing they can do about this controversial provision: Strike it off.

Crisis in Timor

FOREIGN COMMENT

THE RUNNINGS OF VARIOUS UNITED NATIONS, INDONESIAN and East Timorese inquiries into the mayhem around the birth of East Timor remain, frustratingly, gathering dust in judicial archives rather than being used as touchstones for specific criminal investigations and prosecutions.

The 2005 special commission of inquiry has reported in a comedy way. Notably, the former interior minister, Rogerio Lobato, the former defense minister, Roque Rodrigues and the defense force chief, Taur Matan Ruak, are cited for illegally transferring arms illegally to militias.

The commission concluded that the fragility and the weakness of the rule of law were the underlying factors in this year's crisis. Much has already started to rebuild the police and, as the commission suggests, respect for the rule of law. The case for drop-DNA-immediate in the morning of the elections is made even more strongly.

The Sydney Morning Herald (Australia)

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Feedback time

VIEWPOINT

Juan L. Mercado

economically repulsed efforts to broaden the social contract. The sensitive are weary of the lies and the brightest simply leave the country."

From Oregon, Indimi Cebu Daily News & Inquirer Book Columnist Campbell, e-mailed: "On the internet, I read Americans are so caught on the downturn, by poor daughter and her husband, in Palo Alto, to adopt a baby from China. Congratulations on your new Chinese granddaughter.

"There are a number of American couples I know who are adopting Chinese babies. A fellow parish friend here in Oregon, married to an American, told me their baby will come from China.

"Why didn't you pick one from the Philippines?' I asked. 'They are of our blood.' But she replied: 'Our rules make it very difficult. Applicant up to 40 (mid-50, Philippine rule, "It's a lot of red tape"). Then, it takes a long time to get approved. So, we chose China so long. Only next year, we will pick the baby up and bring her to Oregon."

From Australia, Robert Brown said the source article, spotlighted by "Borrowing against our marrow," is important. Australia is starting to realize that it must lessen the use of coal fired plants that induces climate change. The issue will "get follow up space."

In Paris, Thelma Perral Awaki works on migration and development issues. She sent this additional comment: "Our politicians made their shortfalls in adequacy with a surplus of words. This is true of Cebu where shoulder, inadequate and often polluted water systems exist as well.

"Gov. Gwendolyn Garcia would encourage the 'international harvesters' of water agencies. Mayor Tomas Osmeña enjoins the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank to 'listen' to its water project proposal. A clueless city council parrots the mayor. End to its political opportunism in the inadequate water agency.

"Manufacturers never promised a single drop of water. And still, it was a submariner for a well thought-out policy that will recover water 20 years from now. Politicians merely 'shovel smoke.'

The likelihood of conflicts increases as water scarcities spread. Again, the poor, who pay more for their polluted water, will be the first victims. Hence, priority must be accorded to develop a policy that ensures water is synchronically, as it will be available in the future.

From Manila, Max Gacayan notes: "FGIs estimate 'hunger' to wonders! Was an 11-member team sent to Mindanao to evaluate while scientific advances could have fed growing populations, globally, 842 million people lack food. And their number is increasing.

"A test exists in government. Infrastructure age jeopardy populations, but especially, doesn't produce enough food. They have little self-help options for alleviation of hunger. "Making sure everyone has enough to eat is more about politics than science."

"But governments care to be ended inter-nots. Large tracts of arable lands are buried in concrete. What future can we expect for the agriculture sector, the producer of food?

"We must modernize. And those in authority who regulate the use of land and other resources, must get their priorities right. That includes stopping a disproportionately huge share of budgets for arms and the other agencies of their populations' basic needs. Where can we turn to for hope?"

• • •

E-mail: juan_mercado@pacific.net.ph

Haunted

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiroz

(Concluded)

3. GHOST OF THE PAST: THE US SEALS THE exception in the cube because, among the outcasts, ghosts haunting the country that is the heaviest user. For some years, the cremation note or exhibition of the past can't seem to penetrate our senses.

Benigno Commission member recall it "the living past," the past that has something to say to the present, the past that remains vital to our lives today, the past that flows on to our present and guides our future. That is what other people have, a living past, a past they recall—so, they relate to—with the passion of lovers. It helps, of course, that in some countries, such as Thailand and England, the past is embodied in living symbols like the king or Queen. That it's more than that The past I'm not in the theater but in the heart.

All we have of the past is a dead past, dredges from those we visited in their resting places years ago. Today, it is easy to say that we can relate to remember the past is to say that Dalai is not active about the truth or being called a result, which best comes first. It is the understatement of the ages. We don't even recall that we made EDSA by People Power and that we are made by People Power. But which is why, we now have it.

6. Those democracy People who do not read their history wanted George Santayana, are condemned to repeat it. He's right. People who do not remember the past are condemned to repeat it. Gloria Macapagal Arroyo.

Democracy has pretty much given up in ghost. Or it's but a ghost that's left of our democracy. Forget that in a democracy leaders are elected by the people, forget that in a democracy leaders serve for a period of time and their go, forget that in a democracy people are promised honesty and provide public. Remember only that in a democracy dissenter and civility and neighborliness thrive unqualifiedly, with zero moral ambivalence from people like the folk of San Francisco, standing up for their gay rights. So, more than that, remember only that in a democracy people are not naturally murdered.

The only thing we have plentifully notice is the ghosts of the dead. The dead dead, the dead dead. That is not a democracy, this is a ghoul town.

7. Shocking message. Frankly, I don't know why Ann Hidal isn't running in her seats. For some reason the ghost President of this country, now who has been dead for 10 years, is after that putting a wreath on his monument everywhere she goes. She just did that in China. She did that, too, in several other countries she visited this year. Maybe, she figures Hidal's presence would not sell on her.

All is down to nowhere a ghastly study in country. The only thing they have in common a height. Beyond that, Ateal represents the best of the indios lovers. GMA represents the worst of the indios colonists. At the very least Ateal tries the opinions of honesty and indio-ness. He didn't have a story about mobilizing and getting down a cherry or a baloo cruz, but he had a story about touring his cyber dipper into a river after his first one fell into it, his point being to supply the linker with a pun. Our always lovable Erap, on the other hand, didn't remember the electoral rebels, in the 2002 celebration of Hidal's death anniversary, she wanted on his grave not to rest.

Ateal did say like Anonymous that people who did not look back at where they came from would never know where they were going. But then that advice can't possibly project in a nation that cannot cling to the ghost of the past, or even remember him, cf. No. 5 above.

8. Ghost terror, ghost people. I suspected last Monday. Why 'cadaver-stinking' Zamora Romero's zombie movies when we have even better options right here? That's us, as a nation, as a people. That's what we're beside since July last year when "Hello Garci" became a ring tone; or since late last year when the impeachment bid became a railway; or since February this year when Danilo Lim's attempted "withdrawal-support" took on a ghastly tone—take your pick of months in between. Our country's quite known to dead, that looks at the world with blank eyes and feels nothing, that smiles around with some unmotivated... you don't recall. It's know it's threat or supplication—not knowing where it's going or what it's doing. That is what a Filipino is now, indeed.

The ghost nation and people go further. We've only had a ghastly sense of nature in legends, gardening in few bedrooms; notably in America, from the start. Today there has taken on a ghastly form, a ghastly practice of the population selling for distant shores and many more scrambling for the docks, to part dreams by the time of green pastures abroad, and more and more debris, cut by the stench of the dead at home. This isn't a nation, this is a ghost town.

9. Ghost of the future. Ghosts are recurrent, and ours, this place will be forever haunted with only a cold mind bowling no one's cared and barely repeat dusted by the bones of the dead.

9. Miscellaneous. Fortunately, some ominous have come by in the last couple of months. Ateal's not the only one to have died this month. GMA was humbled by angry shouts from the living for her to stop piling up the dead. Japanese Ninoy Aquino still... no wonder!... no effort by people who never got round into office to visit him in the shrine of Makati. And the Supreme Court saw through the horror movie that was Jose de Venecia's Cha-cha—no great thrills, just a lot of Dodi makeup. Who knows? With elections coming in next year, maybe this concern can recover some spunk of its anger or even courage to come to life again. Then maybe we can have a...

10. Ghost of a chance.

• • •

Reminder: Tonight, Hop the Killings Bar Team Unplugged: Adrienne Myers (Female Gali Adrienne), 9:30 p.m., Chihuly Pizza, Cubi Lex, Imagio and 100 Cycle Mind. Remember the dead, don't add to them.

Can a spring rise above its source?

TO A NUMBER OF PEOPLE, THE PROPOSITY OF Charter change amounts to donning by the day-fit. Or, for the time, albeit much easier, the office being in the hands of an ultra-risky Supreme Court and with a Senate not considered markedly likely to be due docile by the same Court, talk has shifted to a constitutional convention. We all know that this President is unlikely to agree to share power with a prime minister. How people, except reactionary ones, would react to the proposal to Charter change, but few who want to sacrifice it is.

* * *

Some other the Supreme Court ruling on the people's initiative come down, I suspect, after reading the Carpio panacea, that 'if by some miracle Charter change should ever happen, the first amendment that ought to be scrapped is the people's initiative.' Where the party which submits made by the majority of the Court on the allegedly fraudulent signature campaign by the pro-initiative group, I doubt if people would ever trust to it again as a way of changing the Constitution. For the Court seemed to have counted that indicated.

* * *

The Court decision devoted nearly half its text, over to ruling on pleas of "grand conspiracy" and "gigantic deception." It argued that the signatures were not chosen or asked to read the proposed amendments prior to affixing their signatures. Whether or not this is true, I believe that the Constitutional Commission on Charter change was ignored in ruling this requisite as "complied." By mood that is ignored the only one of which, TV, viewers in Metro Manila, and the newspaper frames for the information drive and the lively debates between the pro and anti groups. Illiterate interested the decision as "the triumph of ignorance over progress." Here is to hoped that neither did the politicians to approve the 1987 Constitution ensure that it was read by all.

* * *

While the Commission condemned people's initiative, the narrow strictures to which the Court subjected it, as well as the genuine issues

Political Tidbits

Belinda Olivares-Cunanan

by anti-initiative lawyers, paid only lip service to popular sovereignty. For instance, it is hard to understand the insistence of some justices and lawyers that because the Terms of Local Industries of the Philippines led the signature campaign, it was not a people's initiative but the politicians' project. But is a democracy leaders most lead the people. Ironically, while the critics attacked the participation of Ulay and other people's organizations, they ignored that the commission should spring from the people in the streets, they also ignored the signature campaign to be positive in form, including additionally printed draft proposals!

* * *

Reading the dissenting opinion of Justice Teresita Perez, I found his consideration of whether the Commission's power rebuilding. Perez included in the Court's opinion that the Commission could not go beyond its proposals! Of the 1986 Constitutional Commission has allowed it at length. He pointed out that "sometimes with the wrong of drawn democracy, the majority of delegates, whether from small small were welcomed as partners in the Constitution." He cited Commissioners Tito Ople, father of the initiative provisions, who said that the Commission was not bound by itself and its own rules made that it exercise this people and their organizations the right to formulate and propose their own amendments and revisions of the Constitution if a majority of the people should approve." Ople said "the ultimate exercise of sovereign power will rest upon the people and, to the exercise of this power, they can propose amendments or revisions to the Constitution."

* * *

Pure challenges the critics' assertion that intuitive system proposes "substantial" amendments and that revision is the sole domain of the constitutional convention or constituent assembly. I read your assertion. Assuming that this argument "turns sovereignty on its head," Perez said that "in the very least, (it) assumes to the democratic space for the exercise of the direct sovereignty of the people." He said it also "overlooks that the sovereign people who they claim are only to trusted with the power to propose 'simple' but not 'substantial' amendments."

Perez pointed out that the people delegated to Congress to exercise of this sovereign power to amend or revise the Constitution. If so, "can it be argued that the sovereign people who delegated the power have no power to subsequently amend the Constitution by direct action? How can the people look this function of a power to subsequently amend the Constitution when the latter is accomplished by circumstances from them?" It would take some months justice to argue that the whole is less than its part, he said, or that "the spring can rise above its source."

* * *

The Ad Constabulis international Film Festival, a joint initiative of the National Commission for Culture and the Arts, the Film Development Council of the Philippines, and the Cultural Center of the Philippines, kicks off tomorrow at the Old Mall of this with a triple feature: "Perhaps Love." Chita's first musical film in 36 years, directed by Gong Joongh Hwa (1:30 p.m.). Then at 4 p.m. Ishiro Honda's "Rodan's or Los Islas de Filipinas, the Series," a short Filipino film with live music from the Radiowaves Ships Project, and "The Science of Sleep," a post-Gondry film by Michel Gondry. Both at Ayala Museum. Opening international Lens dramatic feature, Carl Gabriel Bernal and directed by award-winning French director Michael Gondry, at 7 p.m. "Invitation" is the first film by a Filipino director to 76 full length films from 15 countries and four categories. Festival director Tony Agudon said a prize winner in the life and intimacy of national hero Dr. Jose Rizal, now showing at Greenbelt Rizal Rooms. The shows are open to all. For details call: 527 21 05 or 67, loc. 406.

Limbo rocked

Human Face

Ma. Cristi P. Dayo

TODAY, NOV. 2, IS ALL SOULS' DAY. WE PAY her our dear departed. But from having Filipinos silence do the feasting and remembering is an excuse as if they might be too much somewhere else to have it. "All Saints' Day, a what Filipinos consecrate it over-up thousand.

We Filipinos have a way of subsuming the ritual order to suit our festive mood. Well, All Souls' Day is the day to go to the cemetery. Or, to be specific, to picnic in the cemetery. To institute the Christian unions "officially" begins to make friends. It without for two months.

But back on awhile to the 11th month. We all know that the Catholic Church has declared that the souls Filipino families is drawn to their old homestead. Gatherings in the provinces are so much every during and Pinas, visits down to Metro Manila, when the Pinoy has taken up an American citizenship, that I find myself one of it.

On the solemn eve of mystery rites, some mystical influences. I can still sing the first and last lines of the Latin requiem chant that he taught us in high school. Then, I used to be the first in the second non-Romanesque chapel in school. "Dies irae, dies illa, solvet saeculum in favilla..." Translated as, "Rather still, and the day of wrath, I believe the day of prophecy..."

It ends with the poet-sig, "Dal'ed that day, this courage of Amelia..." "Full of tears and fateful dread, is the day that wakes the dead..."

Oh, I admit my love and dread the rampage of the wrong kind.

The being the scares that makes a sojourner on the other bank, there is now no reason to wonder whether the dead are really happy or not, separated from the afterlife. The Roman Catholic Church created that place during the Middle Ages but now the magisterium decided to doom it. 1998 the so-called purgatory indulgences be On the chopping?

Blame the creation of the limbo approach on the passage of the stamp of original sin and the outdated way that it was taught.

A few years ago, Pope John Paul declared the scrap of limbo, the place where Catholics were made to endure, the result of an ingrained children

Four points for discussion

The Long View

Manuel L. Quezon III

2. Perhaps problem-solving. Expenses to how many can be taken through public-private partnerships—particularly when done with a view to providing services—even as a practical reminder of the benefits of a collective approach to society's problems. Is there a way to bring the benefits that often accompany working and living abroad considered Filipino time approaching the benefits that often and the framework of those—and why other—Filipinos.

Instead of the usual, well-intended and short academic discussion, that be discussed in such the idea of national planning, under a national vision, with national goals in mind, be bandaged the idea of national will and purpose. Here are 4 questions to start with:

By form of economy, different sectors are benefiting the most for national goals, according to a direction of national priorities, that not benefiting are so without the chief objectives in developing as slowly, and independently in various quarters within one, and no group, as yet, prepared to settle together the coordination and consensus-building necessary for implementation.

3. Positive legislation. Because many reforms only begin to have an impact within a generation, the success of the Local Government Code has been documented upon nationally. Local government are, in many cases, small and will have not one of ideas to spend means funds. But they would rather spend them on campaigns and politically self-indulgent projects than make investments in the future, such as in education and leadership. Left to themselves, local governments would simply subsume the responsibility of universal officials with their own, which limited, and lacking, in the true sense.

Flush with cash, local governments should invest their surpluses in their neighbors, including among regional governments. This means projects be available purchases and a higher standard of living, as well as stronger economies for their poorer neighbors, and eventually such terms as private-sector investments. Regional planning proposed to compete nationally and globally. The national government, ideally, would be first positioned to provide the regional coordination, but as we mentioned, it will probably be left to the initiatives of a regional approach—which local governments aren't able to see.

The national government will now regional growth as the only lasted with its go-to nationally for President, it will provide the infrastructure support in Metro Point that the bureaucrats, who know better, are unwise isn't involved, and that no province no longer about, except the particular provincials of the Department of Interior and Local Government.

4. Stewardship and excellence. This is the emerging solution. It is being done all over. It's being done politically, in local governments, within the framework of the Local Government Code. But it's not being done in terms of national and regional policies. Successes have been achieved in local governance level. But the biggest obstacle to a national vision is local success. Local success can be a trap, when it becomes a national reward, to be set-up within developed institutions that when people do to improve schools, build housing for the poor, and [illegible] have gotten used to the easy and short-term national approach. This is the only way to bridge the gap between local dynamism and national malaise and inertia.

The best example I can point to is how the Gran Long Festival and the Cultural Revolution arrived. China has an intellectual, managerial, economic crisis political—down. It took them 30 years to recover. It took us 14 years to recover from the Martial Law years. Assuming that we have no more [illegible] in the next 20 years, in recovery from Edsa II, Edsa III, 2004 and 2010.

Jeepneys and airplanes

EVER SINCE I CAN REMEMBER, I ALWAYS SURPRISED him as "Tatay." Everyone among his grandchildren called him "Lolo" but the eldest among them preferred to call him "Tatay."

Amanda Cosme Santana, my mother's father, was born, grew up and lived in Tondo, Manila. As a young age, he learned how harsh life could be. After graduating from high school, he had to start working as a jeepney operator. My children, who had a nothing resemblance in 1951, he married at a young age.

Manila, who was the eldest, was still in grade school when her Tatay walked out on them. Tatay had to raise five kids all by himself.

Young Blood

Abigail B. Villacorte

We seem to know what the young are thinking about. What are their thoughts on current issues? Or their aspirations? Find the twenty-something and below — Ed.

During the time he operated a single-cab, barely 10 years of his marriage, Tatay's day began at 2 a.m. Upon waking up, he would make breakfast for the children, and prepare the things they had to bring to school. Then he was off driving a jeepney for hours of the day.

He plied the Avenida-Tondo route for eight long and hard hours daily. As soon as he was done with the day's work, he went to market. Then he would hurry home to prepare dinner for his kids. After that he would help them with their assignments, and put them to bed before going to sleep.

This was Tatay's life for 20 years, and my niece did he see or talk to him. Even after my parents got married, I still had only an occasional chance to see him. Tatay would hurry home every morning before I left for school, and he would be home only after I was already fast asleep.

I have pages of photo pictures showing Tatay holding me in his arms. My hardest childhood memories are of the times I spent with Tatay. When I was in my elementary years, Tatay usually took me with him on his jeepney. I would sit beside him and collect the fare from the passengers. But when I complained that I was getting dizzy and felt like throwing up, he would take me home in the earliest opportunity.

It was part of Tatay's routine to visit us every day. And every day, as I would see him, I was always completely waiting for him. When he arrived, he would give me and my cute brothers our Magnolia chocolate. After dinner, he would proceed to entertain us with his stories of adventures and play with us until it was time to bed. That is what I mean.

Tatay had only a small school in Tondo. When we were in college, my brother Dave and I opted to stay with him, despite the cramped space in his church. We never once felt the hard floor on our backs because of Tatay's jokes. He had a way of making us forget our problems.

One day when I was a college senior, I received a ill news and it shocked me to smithereens. I rushed home and found Tatay in the midst of the rubble that was once his house. It was the time that I saw him crying. "What's going to happen to us?" he asked in Tagalog. Dave had no answer.

For the next two years, Tatay took us to his house. Eventually, he stayed for a while in Pampanga, with a daughter in Del Pan, Manila, and then with a son in Cavite. But wherever he was, we were constantly calling him to ask how he was. He always assured us that he was OK.

When I started working, Manila, and I agreed that Tatay should live with us. Eventually, we chose to live in Tondo because our new unit made us more determined to raise him home.

On June last year, Tatay came to live with us in the duplex unit. Because, he was ill and his asthma had worsened. The attacks came frequently that he was sent into intensive care. My mom took care of him during the day, while I took over the night shift. Because his daughter was often followed by coughing and another asthma attack.

On November last year, Tatay and I had a joint birthday celebration. My brother's Dexter and Dave brought their friends over to our house and played songs that he liked. Tatay was up and was watching us. He was happy. Tatay was very happy, and then chided him for wasting so long to have his "debut." He later told Manila that he was very happy because it was the first time he had a "grand" birthday celebration.

On December last day, Tatay was very tired as he opened gifts from our friends. He was very tired. On December 26, he was rushed to the hospital. I accompanied the ambulance.

Last July 16, minutes after I reached home, Manila and I were shocked to find Tatay crying and writhing his chest. He complained that he was having a very hard time breathing. "I mean breathing," he said.

We hurried through Tatay to the doctor. During the short trip to the clinic, he was asking me if I had a date trip. It was the same question he would ask me every time I went home for the weekend, and I knew him even more because despite the pain, he still showed me his concern.

At the clinic, the doctor told us that Tatay was suffering from enlargement of the heart. He also learned that he was having difficulty breathing not because of asthma but because his kidneys were blocked. His condition was not good at all.

Tatay loved surprises, and seven days after the discovery of his heart problem, he pulled the biggest one on us. He left us, and now with him a part of my heart.

The death of my grandfather is something that I will never talk about without tears falling from my eyes. I have lost count of how many times I have replayed July 23 in my head and wondered what I could have done differently to change what happened. Death has a way of making everything seem surreal. And right now, as I struggle to get up from a hard fall, I am in a best as to how I can resume living in the raw world.

When my job application to work at the Manila International Airport Authority was accepted, Tatay had told me, "Sabog mkaya ng apo ko. Mkakabalik na ako ng probinsya ano." (That's my granddaughter... really talented. Now I will be able to live in the province.)

It has been more than three months since Tatay left me, and I am so sorry that I was not given the chance to fly with him. I cannot [illegible] to tell him my side was. But nobody asks anymore. And I take comfort in the thought that wherever he is now, he is up there cheering me on and looking down on me.

I love Tatay, I miss him so much. And if he knew how much I missed him, I know he would be crying, too. But maybe he will keep remembering me by waving to the airplanes passing by.

Abigail B. Villacorte, 26, is an information officer at the Manila International Airport Authority.

Notice to Youngblood contributors:

Send your contributions by e-mail to youngblood@inquirer.com.ph, together with your address, age and the school, work or unit you're with. Or, if you're employed, the department you're holding and the company you work with. Give attributes to Youngblood should not have been previously published.

A crazy idea about uniting

LETTERS

I WOULD LIKE TO THANK ATTORney Daniel Macaraeg for his thoughtful piece about the "religious box" (PDI, 10/14/05).

A bit of a personal reflection: When I first came to the Philippines in 1962, I was assigned to West Zamboanga. In this remote, diverse town on Zamboanga, a stable Baptist community and a Muslim sector, we got along. Oh, but it was dour, we had our particular "boxes." (Does anyone like your own?)

Come martial law, and we were working with farmers' federations of Mindanao, Muslim and Christian, to create a coalition of Mindanao people in the struggle against martial law. Muslim and Christian leaders, Muslim and Christian lay men and women, Catholics, Baptists, Methodists, "Mindanao," gay and straight, old and young — all committed to working to serve the poor, willing to share what we have with each other, according to need, and to come together regularly to reflect on the reality of our commitment. For him, it was food; for God, spending time in our concerns, but we need not isolate it that way.

Crazy idea, but who knows?

PS. Do you think we should propose it to the Congregation for Religious?

—REV. JOHN LEONG, CSSS/SCJ

Legislators to do Filipinos a favor by raising salaries of gov't doctors

I STRONGLY SUGGEST THAT Congress enact a law increasing the salaries of government doctors by a triple. From what I gathered, doctors in government hospitals, such as those in the Davao Medical Center are only receiving about P15,000 a month—which is about the salary of a call center agent. This is terribly unfair to go through 10 years of study and hard training to become a doctor.

On top of this, doctors in government hospitals work almost with no day-off, and sometimes they have to work for one to three consecutive days without getting any compensation for overtime work. No wonder, some doctors are looking for employment outside the country, even if they have to serve as nurses. Only a few doctors would be assigned to government hospitals because of the low pay, and even those already in government would think of transferring to private hospitals.

Right now, the number of doctors in government hospitals is alarmingly very disproportionate to the number of patients. Let us not make it worse.

I only have high admiration for government doctors who remain for the people, the true pay and heavy work load. I think that most of them are there mainly because of their dedication and passion for the service. It is high time that we did something about the government doctors' low pay through legislation before all the doctors run away from government hospitals.

Government doctors are the real modern-day heroes. They are the ones who serve Filipinos who don't have medical insurance and can't afford the services of private doctors—meaning, the majority of Filipinos.

I therefore appeal to our legislators to have pity on their countrymen and do show a big favor by raising the salaries of government doctors, as well as the budget for government hospitals, medical equipments and facilities and medicines.

Lastly, let me also appeal to other Filipinos like Attorney Macaraeg, Jaime Cobarrubias Tan and Lhuvy Ig, to follow the example of John Lokanganga's (who donated P10 million—or, education) and share a part of their fortune to the cause of health for our less privileged countrymen, and make this country a better place to live in.

—ERICKE RIZALDO,
[illegible] Rd., San Isidro,
Davao City

The ghost

I WAS SURE I LOCKED THE MAIN DOOR, so I always do before going to bed at night. But when was that that has awakened me? Feets sounds of footsteps walking on the narrow corridor. Seemingly, some whispering that could hardly be heard as if coming from afar. Coughing and scratching noises coming from outside the bathroom.

It must be a big rat crawling under the floor ceiling. I told myself in an attempt to be logical. But no, I was also hearing the door opening and closing in no regular pattern. My heart started beating so fast and my bones were opening weak. I was screaming but felt real mild.

Could a robber have found a way to enter my home? I blamed myself for the first time never, but I was all alone in the house and I used to rely on myself. Should the thief touch on my door, I would open it bravely, turn my back on him then contemptuously instruct him to just blindfold me while taking everything he could for as long as he spared my life.

But the robber blanked. As the panic, I heard the opening and closing of the door of the outdoor room. Afterwards, the dragging wasn't from the floors. Someone must be there! See how could anyone be there when my main door was securely locked? I had gone pass, yes, just before I had my cold mean broke out of my nerves and I couldn't breathe.

I pinched myself intensely hoping that I was just dreaming, but I was fully awake. I even checked the time on my cell phone. It was 12:46 a.m., almost midnight.

Could it be a ghost? Her ghosts real? I pressed hard, even shielding myself with the protective white tapis of Ilocos. Praying was the only thing I could do at the moment. "Sanctus Deus, Sanctus Jesus, Sanctus Immortalis, miserere nobis (Holy God, Holy Mighty One, Holy Immortal One, have mercy on us)." My mother always uttered that prayer whenever she felt danger around. Could it be the ghost of a friend who came to cross-examine me for the night, saying he was feeling numb all over his body and could hardly breathe? He was requesting for help, but I didn't even know his address, and so I just suggested some practical relaxing procedures. He said I felt guilty, and now I was scared that he would have died of a heart attack and his ghost was paying me a visit. Or could it be the ghost of an asset to count who took their revenge?

At any case, I decided to make to the ghost to talk what it needed or expected to say. But I chose instead to remain very quiet, while trying as much as I could to keep my composure and presence of mind. I thought of creating an illusion that I was not afraid at all. I even tried to sing a song, but I could not remember any. I did not pray the rosary, but I recited the Our Father and the Hail Mary. I was not afraid of dying, but I was afraid of the pain that I would feel when I die.

Across the NATION

Text or e-mail your feedback: inquirer.net/cgi-bin/feedback.cgi/message to 2337 (Globe) or 281 (Smart); Assistant Editor Tony Bergonia

'Paeng' toll: 19 dead, 15 missing

SUPERTYPHOON "PAENG" LEFT AT LEAST 19 people dead, 58 injured and 15 others missing in Northern Luzon mostly due to falling trees, landslides and floods, according to official reports.

As of yesterday, the National Disaster Coordinating Council (NDCC) also placed at P431 million the damage to agricultural and infrastructure in Paeng's swept through provinces in Region I (Ilocos region), II (Cagayan Valley), III (Central Luzon) and the Cordillera Autonomous Region.

Disaster officials said Paeng, the strongest typhoon to hit the country in years, did not cause as much damage as feared even as it packed 195-kph winds and 240-kph gusts when it made landfall in Casiguran, Aurora, on Thursday.

As of yesterday, power has been fully restored in Nueva Ecija, Bataan, Olongapo and Pampanga while power has been partially restored to Subic's (39 percent), Zambales' (55 percent) and Cagayan (86 percent).

The suburbs of Quezon and Aurora provinces, however, are still experiencing power interruptions due to clearing of fallen trees, according to the National Power Corp. (Napocor).

Portions of PLDT and Digitel phone land lines were temporarily interrupted in Quezon, Isabela and Cagayan.

Several barangays were isolated due to landslides and destroyed bridges, according to the NDCC.

Many roads in Nueva Vizcaya province were reported to be impassable due to landslides and fallen logs. Some roads in Ifugao remained impassable due to washed-out bridges and destroyed bridges.

In Region II, clearing operations are ongoing to roads affected by mudflows and landslides. Some roads were impassable after bridges were destroyed or washed out.The worst affected is in Isabela province.

In the Cordillera Administrative Region, 85 percent of the roads have been cleared of landslides.

THE MIPEROS family gave what was once part of their riverbed in Sitio Marungal, Barangay Buenavista in Quezon, Nueva Vizcaya. The raging river, swelled by rains brought by supertyphoon "Paeng," has cut the farm and washed all the sand, looming like rubble.

Hopes of finding survivors of flood dim

By the Inquirer Northern and Central Luzon

QUEZON, NUEVA VIZCAYA, Aurora—Hopes of finding survivors among those missing here in the aftermath of tropical storm "Paeng" diminished Wednesday, prompting disaster officials to shift activities to recovery operations three days after the devastation.

Rodina Agustin-de, action officer of the provincial disaster coordinating council (PDCC), said relatives of the 15 reported missing had virtually given up hope of finding their loved ones alive as the search entered the third day on Wednesday.

"Under the conditions that they were running, we already consider them as casualties. Our search-and-rescue operations are on the open. The roads so we can bring in relief goods to the disaster areas," Agustin said.

One of the worst hit villages here is Buenavista, which was ravaged by flash floods as the river overflowed and burst about 400 feet of its banks in Sitio Lomera sending the three feet of mountain soil.

Relief operations

The village has been cut off from the rest of the town due to several landslides and washed off portions of the road, and may only be reached through a 3-km hike. The road is the main evacuation for farmers transporting their crops produce from Maddalong Valley in Kasibu town.

On Tuesday, bags of relief goods were shuttled to the site to aid residents who were on their second day digging up and drying up burned and washed belongings.

Ten people, including a family of six, were reported missing and feared dead.

Alfred Albia, his wife and their four children aged one week to seven years, were swept away by the strong river current while they were asleep inside their hut in Sitio Kinabuhan.

Five women relatives from Pantoc Norte were also swept away by the river current after they left prayer while trying to hold onto Sol, 6, Citadel, their host, said village chief Cesley Batad.

Perlita Cajindo was pinned and killed inside her home. Her husband and son suffered serious injuries and were taken to the Veterans' Regional Hospital in Bayombong town, about 60 km from here.

Residents of Barangay and nearby villages have been receiving the donated for the raining river Monday.

The PDCC has estimated the damage to infrastructure here at P33.4 million, with the washed out portions of the Kasibu-Quezon Road in Sitio Maningasal costing about P5 million to repair.

The upland town of Kasibu, considered as Cagayan Valley's rice basket, has been isolated as the two main roads leading to the town have been cut off either by fresh floods or buried under thick soil such as portholders.

To reach the site, relief workers would have to hike for about seven hours, Agustin said.

"That circumstances area of Kasibu is denied by [helicopter] private [sources of the steep slopes and the rains, which makes it very difficult to maneuver and land. Our second option is to drop the goods to the disaster area," she said.

Break from work

Relief operations, however, were hampered on Wednesday as volunteers and government workers spent time to observe All Saints' Day.

On Tuesday, the provincial board declared the province under a state of calamity and allowed the disbursement of five percent of its annual budget for typhoon relief and rehabilitation activities.

In Cagayan, police said rice as losses on Wednesday found the town of Gattaran to be the worst hit area of Cagayan province on Oct. 29.

Supt. Leon Rafael Cagayan police operations officer, said the PNP Gamusrefal, which was on using 17 passenger and crew members, was safe, drifting near the waters of Pagudpud, Ilocos Norte.

Rafael said their reports indicate that the passengers were safe, with at least four of them rescued at past 3 p.m. Rescue operations were ongoing as 6 p.m., he said.

Senior Supt. Jaime Andrew Ahmad, Cagayan police director, said the local, which was based in Camiguin Island in Gonzaga, developed engine trouble and was battered by strong waves.

Ahmad said the boat did not capsize but it drifted toward the western Ilocos Norte.

In Isabela, Dinapigue Mayor Renato Cosalan said about 30 residents seriously hurt as various typhoon-related incidents were taken to hospitals in Cabagantan City and Baler, Aurora.

Two military helicopters brought relief goods to at least 4,000 villagers displaced by the typhoon in the town, Cosalan said.

He said most houses and crops in Dinapigue were destroyed by the typhoon's strong wind and rain. "Even the crops and houses were destroyed. We have to start all over again," Cosalan said.

In Isabela, Nagtipunan Mayor Rosario Cimma said a barge connecting the town to Maddela town was destroyed by strong river current.

In Aurora, police and government soldiers on Wednesday continued with rescue and relief operations in the towns of Dilong, Dinalungan and Casiguran, the town worst hit by the typhoon, said Senior Supt. Federico Invinda, provincial police director. Alfredo Cuzcon and Villamor Visaya Jr., Inquirer Northern Luzon, with a report from Rosario Ovejas, Inquirer Central Luzon

Roundup

Teenager eludes abductors

MALOLOS CITY—Police took custody of a 17-year-old girl after she reportedly eluded her abductors on Sunday. Senior Supt. Modesto Gonzaga city police director, said the girl, a native of Mexico, walked off a checkpoint in Barrio Malolos, Bocaue town, a group of men who abducted her. A police report said policemen blocked the girl from a house where she had sought refuge in Bocaue before noon hours of 9:45 a.m. Sunday.

Inquirer Central Luzon and Ed Caparas, Inquirer Southern Luzon

Forest guardians get radios

ILIGAN CITY—Illegal loggers in Mount Agad-agad in Kolambugan town and mediamelons were distributed by Marcos Ong, a group of Tiruray guards, and assistant area. In Mangayan people who belong to the Barug Kalamboan Inc. (BK Freedom), a member of the Bilateral Council of the Iligan-Lanao Concession, said the technology would be helpful in monitoring illegal logging and other activities undertaken in the Mangayan community. Mindanao Bureau, Inquirer Southern Luzon

Priest's music on CD

MANILA (UCA)—Redemptorist Monsignor—The apostolic vicar of the Vicariate of San Jose has launched his first compact disc of liturgical music on the occasion of his silver anniversary of priesthood. Fr. Leroy Quintana, who did not have formal lessons in music, said the release of his CD was scheduled on the occasion of the Advent season. Most of his musical pieces are about Christmas. Quintana said.

Mindanao Bureau, Inquirer Southern Luzon

Towing personnel sued

LIPA CITY—Seven employees of the city's official towing contract, are facing a fine per of grave coercion and grave threat for allegedly threatening to shoot your owners and his to refuse during a towing operation along E. Mayo Street, Barangay 4, Sen. Damaged since 2005 towing incurred during officers Bureau of Discards. Alexander Igot and Ronald Santos, towing operators Dennis Limbo and Jonel de la Torre, truck driver Ryzard Gamarcha and service man Wacky Sumaoy. Supt. Daniel Salazar, city police chief, identified the victims as Michael and Anna Pan, whose Honda Jazz car was towed at 5 p.m. of Oct. 28 for the city engineer's office.

Marion Alexander Lozada, Inquirer Southern Luzon

ZAMBOANGA DONATION

Interior Secretary Ronaldo Puno (top) is olive trunk donated to the Zamboanga City government led by Mayor Celso Lobregat, (at his) over donations made by a local government unit to the Bureau of Fire Protection of the national government. (STAR/RUSSEL PALMA)

Lafayette facing 2nd lawsuit, says alliance

LEGAZPI CITY—LEADERS OF various indigenous groups under the Save Rapu-Rapu Alliance (Save) alleged that another lawsuit of mining in Albay tended to be biased in favor of Lafayette Philippines Inc. (LPI).

Fr. Noldino Bagunilan, secretary parish priest of the Sta. Porciuncula Parish in Rapu-Rapu and spokesperson of the Anti-Lafayette Mining Alliance, accused media to counsel of him to block coverage of the mining issue in Rapu-Rapu.

Bagunilan said they left the media was helping LPI to its propaganda.

Leaders of various mining groups met on Monday in a forum at the Aquinas Center and were assembled in the Department of Environment and Natural Resources here to mark the first anniversary of the Oct. 31 spill caused by the operation of LPI in Rapu-Rapu, Albay.

Lawyer Bevis Collista, Save's legal counsel, said LPI was having a raft for possible violations of the Mineral Production Sharing Agreement (MPSA) and the Financial Technical Assistance Agreement issued by the Mines and Geosciences Bureau.

An MPSA is an agreement between the government and one or the contractor-the contractor has, whether in kind or in value, an enjoy of the minerals, subject to the requirements of the Philippine Mining Act of 1995 and other existing mineral policies in the country.

The new case will be the second one filed by Save against LPI this year.

Lawyer Julius Sumerano, LPI corporate secretary, said he was not aware of the new case that would be filed by the anti-mining groups, but he said they would counter all cases filed against them and that it was up to the court to see if there was enough pieces of evidence.

Albay Rep. Joey Salceda, who was also present in the forum, warned LPI of possible violations of the Foreign Corrupt Business Practices Act.

Salceda said that under the act, multinational corporations like LPI should be adhering to the laws of its home country while in the host country. It should also abide by cultures, values, and rights of its host community by the abuse of mother power.

Sumerano, however, said in a mobile phone interview that LPI, under its new Filipino-American management, now has a completely different.

"It's good for them to allege those things. It's one thing to allege but it's another thing to convict," he said.

The alliance also urged the DENR and the MGB to proclaim the results of the test run.

Engineer Theo Nestor Sr. Administrative Virgilio Penilgan Jr. said he had received reports that LPI would resume permanent operations on Nov. 8 but he questioned why the results of the test run were still not divulged to the public.

Sumerano said that the test run needed test run was yet to end on Nov. 7 and that they were confident they would receive the final filing order from the DENR that would allow them to resume full operations.

"We are meeting every compliance than more compliance. We have more redundancies to ensure responsible mining," he said.

He added the mining company spent P750-800 million for its measures to ensure that its operations would be environmentally safe. Ephraim Apelar, Inquirer Southern Luzon

MILITANTS display a mask on dramatics protests. (MAY)

Fearless Act.

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Local execs from 2 Mindanao regions back terror bill

DAVAO CITY—LOCAL EXECUTIVES from central and southern Mindanao have rallied on the Senate to speed up the passage of the antiterror bill, saying it was needed to counter the threats against the security of the people.

They joined the call in the aftermath of the bomb war in Central Mindanao that killed 26 people and injured here dozen others.

Barring the fires were joint peace and order council meeting for the two regions held on Monday here, the executives—composed of mayors and governors—also endorsed legislation opposed to the passage of the measure.

In a resolution, the executives from the two regions cited the recent bombings to back up their call for the immediate passage of the antiterror bill by the Senate. The House version was passed in July.

Davao City Mayor Rodrigo Duterte also aired his impatience over the passage of the antiterror bill.

"I am aghast because of the very slow process. We need the antiterror bill," Duterte, also presidential antiterrorism adviser, said.

But Duterte said he was not judging the wisdom of the senators.

"The fires that we have are no longer confined to the land of Mindanao but we have now," North Cotabato Gov. Emmylou Taliño said in joining the call.

Davao Occidental Gov. Ms. Elena Palma Gil, who pushed for the passage of the resolution, said she could not understand why Sen. Aquilino Pimentel has been blocking the passage of the bill.

"It is [for] Mindanao and he is supposed to understand the situation of the region," Palma Gil said.

She said Mindanao political leaders shared her view that it seemed was using the bill as a political tool against the Macapagal administration.

"This is not the time for politicking but the time for us to join forces and defeat terrorism," Palma Gil said.

Pimentel, who chairs the peace and order council of central Mindanao, said it was ironic that Duterte was blocking the passage of the bill.

"It is obvious that this is more of a political issue used against the administration," Pimentel said. —Jeffrey M. Tupas, Inquirer Mindanao

LIGHT AFTER DARK

Graves at the Tarca Cemetery in Malo, Bicol's capital, Legazpi City, are lit with electric bulbs in a picture taken hours before hundreds would have filled the burial site to commemorate the dead on All Souls Day.

Mock wake for departed in Ilocos

By Cristina Arzadon
Inquirer Northern Luzon

MIAG-AO, ILOCOS NORTE—Unlike the phenomenal celebratory spirit that normally marks the day of the dead, old timers here honor their departed loved ones by putting up a mock wake in select villages, a practice that had spanned decades but whose origin could only be traced to folk tradition.

Locally known as the tumba, the practice takes an elaborate design usually made of bamboo poles and coconut leaves big enough to accommodate a coffin, an altar and an area for snake gears.

Residents would spruce up their "shanties" by decorating them with flowers and black or white cloth on Nov. 1. Those who can afford would rent a coffin from a local funeral parlor and engage a village official to play dead while a requiem Mass is offered in memory of departed loved ones.

The chapel is kept open until the evening of Nov. 1 when most residents would have some house mates visiting the tombs of their dead in a public cemetery.

Mayor Jesse Sacdalan, 68, former municipal police chief, said his forebears handed down the tradition as a means of remembering and commuting with their dead.

"We have been holding this yearly on the basis on [our] remembrance. It marks a solemn reunion with our dead. We hold the belief that the dead comes to visit their relatives and loved ones on All Souls' Day[,] thus our ancestors established the tradition of holding the wake in one area where all the souls could gather," he said.

Earthly feast

And since food is part of the occasion, residents would prepare a small altar and leave an offering, usually of local sugarcane wine or bar, native cakes and glutinous rice.

"Native Catholics believe that the dead have a way of partaking of the earthly feast, but bring food to remember me just for the consumption of the living but for the dead no well," Dizalde said.

He said relatives would also leave food on small altars in their homes for those departed who might have missed the feast offered to memories.

Before midnight, wake goers would hop from one tumba to another either to partake of the coffin or consume whatever food is left on the altars.

A watchman is posted near the altar to make sure that the visitors do not bring home the food. Popular belief dictates that the food should be consumed inside the chapel until the wake ceremonies are completed at midnight.

FIDAL LIES HERE

Jose Fidal, in a post-Senate investigation has found, was not a fictional character used to launder money but a real person. Rep. Iggy Arroyo, whose late relative and namesake is buried underneath this tombstone at the Main Cemetery in Iloilo City. This Jose Fidal was born March 6, 1927 and died Nov. 28, 1979.

'It's a breeze,' cops say of Luzon cemetery operations

CITY OF SAN FERNANDO—THE observance of undas (Feast of the dead) on 352 cemeteries in Central Luzon's seven provinces was peaceful.

Chief Supt. Ismael Rafanan, regional police chief, said no untoward incident had occurred by noon on Wednesday.

"It's a breeze," he told the Inquirer in a phone interview.

More than 8,000 policemen and about 14,000 village watchmen in Aurora, Bataan, Bulacan, Pampanga, Nueva Ecija and Zambales have been deployed in cemeteries, shopping malls, transportation terminals and villages to secure the public against terror attacks and crimes and assist in traffic management, Rafanan said.

In his messages, provincial police directors reported no untoward incidents in their respective areas.

The police operated more than 200 mobile/motorcycle patrols throughout the region on Wednesday, according to Rafanan.

Knives, bolos and guns confiscated in the hands of cemetery-goers also bopped on public buses, improving bags for lanzes and firearms.

Survey dup

The men was set for the second day on Wednesday and Bondwomen in less than half of 87 cemeteries in Pampanga, the flood basin of the region, had refreshed.

Traffic was light to moderate in the North Luzon Expressway, Macarthur Highway and Mabalacat-Gapan-Olongapo City-Subic Highway as of noon. Motorists bound for Olongapo City and Zambales were treated First Sts. exit in Lubao, Pampanga, to Sinukpinit in Bataan.

Some people found opportunities to earn money during the occasion.

Ivan Bito, owner of John Angel Party Needs, made money renting out tents in cemeteries. Bito rented out a 16-meter by 16-meter tent for P1,200 for a day.

Joy Santiago, 31, painted tombs for P500.

For a few years, have climbed "squatmates," or technicians glued on top of each other, to light candles on tombs that were on the third floor and beyond.

In Baguio City, Rubi Sandino held prayer rallies (ritual feasts) in Irisan cemetery hill, along Loakan Road and Barangay Irisan because their canvas required them to bury their dead within their compounds.

Trek

Families visiting their dead walked for about 2 km to the Baguio public cemetery because of a strict traffic policy imposed by the Baguio City police.

Motorists were restricted from parking inside the cemetery that could only be reached through Kapatalan Road.

"But people spent only an hour to visit so they left immediately and traffic was smooth," said Chief Insp. Jaime Banez, head of the Baguio police Precinct 1. Tomoko Otagiri, Inquirer Central Luzon, and Vincent Cabreza, Inquirer Northern Luzon

Environmentalists' group mourns loss of 18 'green' activists

By Delfin T. Mallari Jr.
Laoang City

ENVIRONMENTALISTS ARE still mourning the violent deaths of 18 "green" activists in different parts of the country, saying the extreme violence demand for justice has remained unmet.

Seven of the victims, who were killed under the Arroyo administration from January 2001 to September this year, came from Southern Tagalog.

Dominic Ramirez, national coordinator of the Kalikasan People's Network for the Environment (Kalikasan-PNE), expressed disappointment over the value-past of government investigations.

Most of the slain environmental workers were farmers, indigenous people, and leaders of local community campaigns against illegal logging and large-scale mining.

Among those killed in Southern Tagalog were:

• Manuel and Dajo Pablo Miralle, Roger Fernando, Dante Ramirez and Ramon Bernabe, all antimining activists in Oriental Mindoro Provincial.

• Napoleon Bermudez, a public school teacher and critic of the Mirant coal-fired power plant.

In a statement, Ramirez said "the investigations into their deaths have slowed to a standstill."

The Task Force Usig of the Philippine National Police and the Melo Commission, which was created by Malacañang to look into killings since 2001, when President Macapagal-Arroyo assumed power, have yet to solve a single case involving slain environmental workers, he said.

Since 2001, no one has been arrested and prosecuted for these killings, Bernabe said.

On the eve of today's commemoration of All Souls' Day, Bernabe said his group staged a protest action and a short program yesterday at the Bonifacio Shrine in Quezon City to condemn the killings of environmental advocates.

He said their fellow activists were all vocal in their opposition to questionable environmental laws, such as the Mining Act of 1995 and the government's attempts to railroad the remaining national preservation or national patrimony and the economy in the Constitution.

Bernabe said military personnel or "state-sponsored assassins" were generally believed to be behind the extrajudicial killings. Police and military officers from the Armed Forces' Southern Luzon Command have denied responsibility for the deaths.

Ramirez said the Kalikasan-PNE would be bringing the issue of the slain environmental workers and advocates to the international community if the government continued to ignore the rising trend of killings among various defenders.

He said it was also considering an mining three cases before the United Nations Human Rights Council and other international forums.

RIVER MEMORIES

Relatives and friends of those who drowned when a jeep fell into the Tangon River in Barangay Barinao, Ilocos, Bulacan province visit the graves of their loved ones in Iloilo City before hundreds flock to the site.

E-mail: sr_provincial_news@inquirer.com.ph

INQUIRER Southern Luzon

Lito Jan Bandayrel
Bureau Chief Florante G. Solmerano

Town dreams of riches in pearl farms

By Bobby Q. Labalan
Camilla, Sorsogon

DAVAO AND PALAWAN WILL soon face a stiff competition in pearl production once a pearl farm started four years ago in Camilla town, 25 kilometers from Sorsogon City, goes on full operation.

Camilla Mayor Dennes Lauremania said the municipality had forged a memorandum of agreement with the Bicol University for the implementation of a more thorough and scientific study and implementation of pearl farming, which, he hoped, would generate more income for its people.

As part of the agreement, the BU Research and Development Center would be established in Sorsogon Cogon.

"If other provinces can, we boldly say we can do it also here," Lauremania had said in pushing for the establishment of the pearl farm in the village before the municipal council.

The mayor said that after the 2001 elections, he learned that Davao- and Palawan-pearl farm operators were sourcing out their oysters, locally known as "piyay," from his town.

"Why allow the raw materials to be taken out from our seas when we can also study pearl farming and give our people additional income?" he challenged the shell gatherers who supplied the bivalve mollusks to the other provinces.

Camilla is a third-class municipality (estimated annual income: P22 million-P23 million) with a population of about 49,000 and a land area of 15,000 hectares.

Good quality

Reed Dimacali, a marine biologist and head of the research center, said the oysters that abound in Cogon were of good quality and very ideal for pearl production.

According to him, two kinds of pearl oysters are found in the municipal waters, which are part of the Sorsogon Bay. The white-lipped (Pinctada maxima) and black-lipped (Pinctada margaritifera). "The former is better than the latter in terms of production," Dimacali said.

Before the local executives came to about a year ago, he said, the oyster farming practice was more of a hit-and-miss. The farmers had adopted the technique from past dealings with pearl farmers from Davao and Palawan.

But with the signing of the MOA, Dimacali said his team are introducing scientific methods to maximize production.

The marine biologist stressed that one good thing about the industry was that it was sanctioned, which would compel the community to keep their seas safe from illegal fishing activities, like dynamite and cyanide fishing.

Initially, the BU team identified five barangays—Buenavista, Manalayas, Tanadtad, Quitogit and Cogon—where farms could be safely established. Five farms is already operational in Cogon.

'Irritating' oysters

Pearl production starts with the introduction of a foreign object, called an "irritant," into the oyster, Dimacali explained. The oyster instinctively protects itself by expelling the object or, in most instances, by coating the foreign object with calcium carbonate or nacre.

Nacre is secreted by the epithelial cells of the mantle tissue of certain species of mollusk. It is continually deposited on the inner surface of the shell (the iridescent nacreous layer commonly known as the "mother of pearl"), both as a means to smooth the shell itself and as a defense against parasitic organisms.

Another farming method, Dimacali explained, was the implantation of a small oyster tissue to the gonad of the oyster which will induce secretion of nacre to cover the mantle and the implant. This method produces the best-quality pearl, he said.

A good quality pearl is produced in 18-24 months and determined by the thickness of the nacre, the scientist said. Since it takes time to produce pearls, he said, the owner would adopt the modular system to ensure production at least every month.

Each owner is good for two production of high quality pearls and has a life span of up to four years.

The BU team has already sourced research on the mass production of oysters to ensure continuous supply of seeds for long-term production. It had earlier conducted stock assessment and spat collection, Dimacali said.

All the information as well as the technology would be turned over to the local government and the community, as agreed upon.

Potential

Ligao fisheries chief Manuel Pareja, a local pioneer in pearl production, said he saw good potential for the industry in Camilla.

He had been supplying pearl "oysters to the Davao and Palawan farms for almost 20 years, until Lauremania urged him to go into farming himself.

Pareja supported his children's education through college by selling oysters to the farms. He buys live oysters at P4.50 per kilo. Some oysters weigh as much as two kilo each.

Divers get the shells from depths of up to 40 meters and the stocks had to be acclimatized to the shallow area, Pareja said.

At present, Cogon has more than 900 oysters, from which the pearlers are said to produce 50 kilos in Manila.

Mayor Lauremania explained that aside from the pearls, the community could derive other income from related industries like shell-craft making, farm souvenir, oyster meat production and restaurants.

During the recent visit to Sorsogon of US Ambassador Kristie Kenney and Sen. Richard Gordon, Lauremania gifted each of them with a souvenir oyster shell with a pearl implant made by the local community.

The BU team is expected to complete its research work by yearend and pearl farm production and expansion could go full blast by next year, he said.

"We need to have more income-generating programs for our people, lest they fall victims to the sweet nothings of the New People's Army," Lauremania said. He is the only local official in the province who has declared an all-out war against the communist NPA.

> 'Why allow the raw materials to be taken out from our seas when we can also study pearl farming and give our people additional income?'

THIS pearl farm in Barangay Cogon, Camilla town in Sorsogon has more than 800 oysters, whose produce are said to jewelry makers in Manila. PHILIP JOHN CHUA

Volunteer group provides shelter to typhoon victims

By Bobby Q. Labalan
Sorsogon City

LIS LABAGAN WAS PREPARING LUNCH OF "bajas" (rice porridge) and boiled dried "alid" (anchovies) when relief volunteers dropped upon her and her family near a seawall in Barangay Bitan-o in Sorsogon City on Oct. 20.

The 26-year-old mother of two looked tired as she laid out plates borrowed from a neighbor and plastic spoons and forks from a fast-food chain on a piece of plywood she had scavenged somewhere.

A three-meter "lansa, or what remains of it, sat where their house used to be.

Debris from Typhoon "Milenyo" were still scattered around, some hanging in mangrove and coconut trees nearby.

Food rules ended from the carnap, adding to the grim reality that confronted Lis's community of about 30 families, mostly of fishermen who had lost all their means of livelihood.

Something stirred from beneath a pile of sacks and rags clothed in the banca. A small head popped up. Lea's 3-year-old son cynical his neck in search of his mother.

Lea's family has been living in the banca since Milenyo ravaged Sorsogon.

"Ak, have no choice but to stay here. We have nowhere to go," Lea said as she scooped her son from the banca and rested him on a mound of empty seashells.

A tattered sack cloth and a piece of rusty galvanized iron served as their roof.

Lea's husband, a shell gatherer, has gone to Camarines Sur where a relative promised him a job as a welder.

After a perfunctory interview, the relief volunteers handed his request to City Councilor Dave Duran, who, after an initial assessment, decided to assist the Labagan family.

Last week, just one of the hundreds of beneficiaries assisted by the S.O.S. Sorsogon, Carbon movement include Bishop Jesse Mercis, Fr. Tony Alpasco and Incoming Founder Fegerin Duran-Apostol). The group extends shelter assistance to the victims of Milenyo, the strongest typhoon to have hit the province in 30 years.

Duran said that normally, housing materials, such as nipa shingles, coconut lumber, bamboo slats, wooden posts, nails or plastic tarps, were given out to the families.

"The assistance would depend on the most pressing needs of the family. If it (their house) still has posts but lacks nipa shingles, then that's what we provide. It depends on the assessment of the volunteers," he said.

"But there were instances when we provided all, including labor cost, if it was obvious that the victims had nothing and would not be able to construct their house, like the Labagan family," the councilor added.

In five instances, the S.O.S. Sorsogon assisted everything, but these were the exceptional ones, Duran said, citing the case of a sick old woman in Barangay Sampaloc and an invalid in Barangay Talisay.

He clarified that the group could not provide for everything but only up to the point where the house had been repaired to become habitable, such as when it already had a roof to protect the family from the rain or the heat of the sun.

In Sampaloc, 75-year-old Salvacion Dorpia was rushed up on a bench when the reporters came to visit her. She was unable to move as she was fighting off severe asthma.

The S.O.S. Sorsogon has built a house for her but it has remained empty. She had not saved any belongings when Hanbaoon in the area reached almost two meters.

Her son, who was suffering from asthma attacks, expressed happiness at the assistance.

Lasting solution

The S.O.S. Sorsogon will continue to focus its relief efforts. Fr. Erland Berosa, one of its convenors, said the impact of the assistance was more lasting assured.

"What we are envisioning is a long-term solution to this problem, not a temporary one. The group is looking at the possibility of relocating those communities in they would no longer be facing the same dangers every time a typhoon hits the city," Berosa said.

He said a person or a group must coordinate all the relief efforts of various agencies and organizations so that help could reach many beneficiaries.

For her, the S.O.S. Sorsogon has raised more than P1 million from various donors.

Berosa thanked the more than 20 volunteers who were helping distribute the housing materials. They have received nothing except cups, towels and long-sleeved jerseys.

Angeline Arbalate of the Inter-Media Sixth Movement, one of the volunteers, said helping in the distribution was her organization's way of empathizing with the victims. "It makes you feel lucky that we are not in their situation," she said.

When the trucks reached the Labagan family on Tuesday last week, a house already stood where the lansa used to be.

LEN Labagan and her family rest their relative comfort in their new home, courtesy of the S.O.S. Sorsogon. PHOTOS BY BOBBY Q. LABALAN

BEFORE relief volunteers came, it used to be life in a banca for the Labagans.

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NEWS

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Kidney donors shortchanged, says DOH

They should be paid at least P200,000, says Health official

By Christian V. Esguerra

HOW MUCH WOULD YOU BE willing to give up your kidney for?

The official in charge of the country's medical tourism program wants to increase the current rate now enticing Filipino kidney donors get for selling their organ to rich foreigners.

At the same time, Health Undersecretary Jade del Mundo wants to increase the cost of a kidney from P200,000 to at least P500,000.

Del Mundo said that currently local kidney donors get only around 150,000, sometimes even less, of the P450,000 for parting with one of their kidneys, with most of the money going to "middlemen."

"Filipino donors are really shortchanged," he told the Inquirer.

Del Mundo, who heads the fledgling medical tourism program, said the middlemen are often Qatar a doctor, travel agent or representative of the embassy of the foreign recipients' country.

They (the middlemen) are the ones who bring foreign kidney transplant patients to the Philippines and help find them organ donors, he said.

Last year at a Makiran-sponsored forum in Manila, Dr. Angeles Tan Alvero, a bioethics expert, warned against unscrupulous middlemen out to take advantage of unwitting Filipino donors, and patients as well.

"The patient might be preyed upon by the unethical or middleman hoping to get the best deal, even involving them in a bidding war to outdo other patients," Alvero said.

She noted that the selling of kidneys was rampant at the Luzeta, Baccood and the Baseco compound in Manila, Navotas-San in Quezon City, and Addition Hills in Mandaluyong City.

To address the issue, the Department of Health's Philippine Organ Donation program and partner organizations will meet with the ethics committees of at least 14 major hospitals on Nov. 10, Del Mundo said.

These hospitals include the National Kidney and Transplant Institute, The Medical City Capitol Medical Center, Makati Medical Center, Asian Hospital, St. Luke's Medical Center, Medical Center Manila, Philippine General Hospital, Manila Doctors Hospital, Polymedic, Cardinal Santos Hospital and the University of Santo Tomas Hospital.

On the agenda will be the proposed increase in the price of kidneys and the percentage that will go to the donors, and the related implications of the rule.

A common concern is the relative ease by which foreign transplant patients can get a new kidney in the Philippines.

One doctor connected to a hospital affiliated with the medical tourism program had earlier told the Inquirer that a patch could be as low as P60,000 for a kidney.

"In the man on the street who doesn't know any better, the price is a fortune," he said. "But they don't know what they're giving up. Today, they may appear healthy, but that's only because they're young. Twenty or 30 years from now ... they [may] regret their decision."

As a rule, kidneys from cadavers are not approved, if the donor isn't ill. The means the donor has to go through a barrage of tests to ensure he won't be needing the kidney he's giving up later on.

Del Mundo admitted the system was far from perfect.

"Some hospitals, in their desire to catch in on the procedure, don't really do the checkup properly," he said.

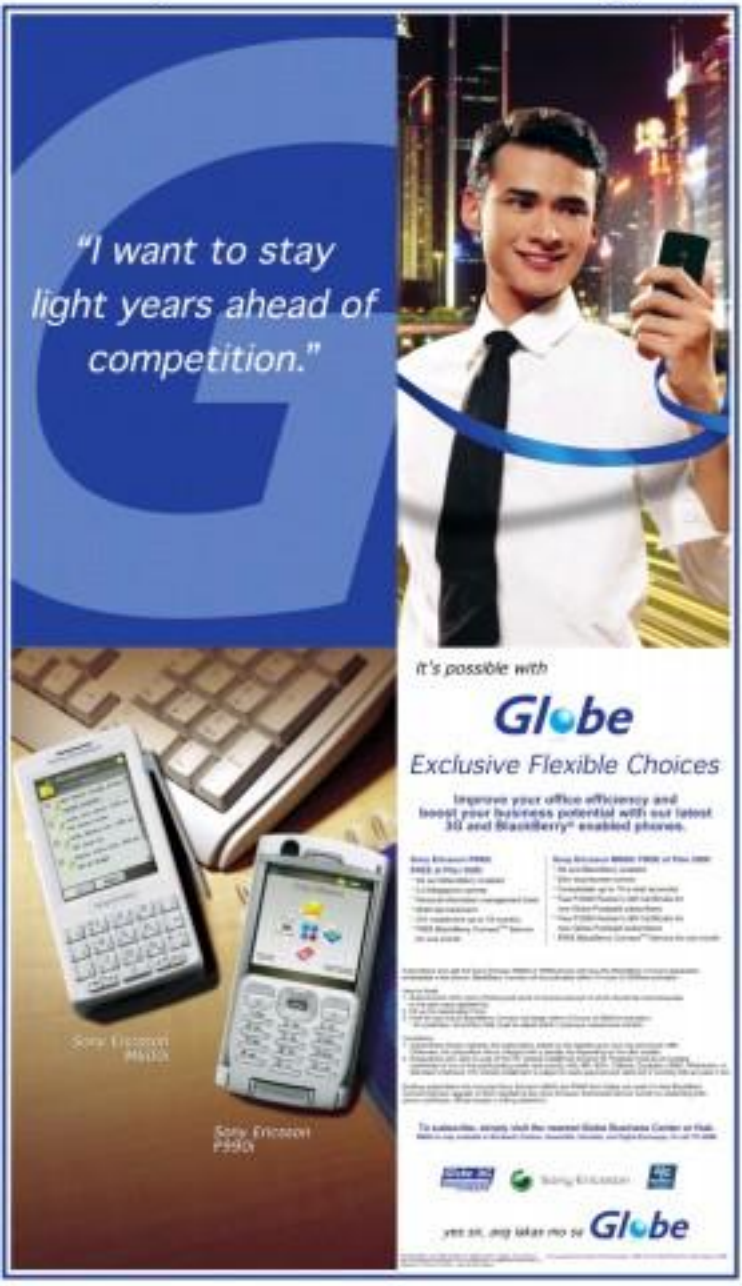
The government is apparently fine-tuning the organ donation system in preparation for the "grand launch" of the medical tourism program next month.

Even if the program is sometimes criticized for supposedly discriminating against local patients in need of kidneys themselves, Del Mundo said the country shouldn't "just shut the door on foreign patients."

"What we need is to give Filipino kidney donors [and patients] adequate benefits and protection," he said.

Another plan is to ease the current restriction on the number of kidney transplants for foreign patients.

So far, Del Mundo said, hospitals are allowed only 10 percent of all transplants annually for foreigners. He said he was willing to extend the limit to 20 percent.



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Low turnout at Metro cemeteries

Short holiday break saw fewer people, smaller revenues in street sales

By Tina G. Santos, Tarra Y. Quismundo and Edson C. Tandoc Jr.

HOPES PEOPLE FLOCK TO CEMETERIES ALL over the metropolis yesterday conspired to last year, officials said.

The smaller crowd was attributed by many to the fact that Malacañang had declared only one day, Nov. 1, as a holiday, unlike previous years wherein Oct. 31 or Nov. 2 were also declared nonworking days.

"It may have been because of the one-day holiday, unlike last year where there was a long, weekend break. Since it was a working day yesterday and there will be work tomorrow, many people may have chosen not to visit today," said Supt. Rolando Miranda, Manila South Cemetery general commander.

He estimated the crowd at the 22-hectare cemetery at around 30,000, down by last year's roughly 60,000 visitors.

Around 150 policemen from the city of Manila kept watch inside the cemetery, augmented by members of the Makati police, for major sanctions and violations.

At the Loyola Memorial Park in Marikina City, the largest cemetery in the eastern part of the metropolis, the crowd swelled to more than 25,000 last night.

The figure, however, was still down from the almost 35,000 people who had trooped to the cemetery last year, according to Allan Raymund Baldoga, a member of a volunteer group that had been tasked to help keep order in the area.

"Some of our relatives in the provinces no longer came here to visit our parents because they still have work tomorrow," said 45-year-old Aileen Perez of her relatives in Batangas, Laguna and Zambales.

Marikina City Police officer in charge Supt. Nestor Yniguez noted that many had already visited their dead over the weekend to avoid the crowd yesterday.

The sparse crowd also resulted in smaller profits for vendors who had set up stalls inside the cemetery.

"Last year was far better," said a woman selling sandwiches and canned soda.

She said she had paid P15,000 in cemetery officials to put up her stall while another ven-

dor, Ney Sanoveza, had shelled out P800 to be able to sell picnic umbrellas. By noon, he was able to sell only three, compared to 10 last year.

"I was just hoping it will sale later so people will be forced to buy my umbrellas," he said.

Under the intense heat of the sun, six persons, mostly elderly, collapsed and had to be cared for by the city rescue unit.

Many were rush off their shirts and were issued half-naked in violation of a Marikina City ordinance which prohibits running in public places without an upper garment.

Six weapons, loud speakers and alcoholic drinks were allowed inside the park, although volunteers confessed that they would not be able to thoroughly check the belongings of visitors.

Businessman Bernardo Balanggo, meanwhile, lost his clutch bag containing several identification cards and checks when thieves broke the window of his van inside the cemetery.

with TJ Burgonio G. A. S.

Dead pets taboo in Manila's cemeteries

By Margaux C. Ortiz

THERE IS NO PLACE FOR DEAD PETS IN THE cemeteries of Manila.

Manila South Cemetery (MSC) administrator Edilberto de la Cruz said yesterday that the 54-hectare cemetery "is too congested" to allow a special place for the interment of animals.

"People have been coming to us to ask for a separate area for their dead pets but we could not grant their requests because of the lack of space," he said.

De la Cruz added that the officers in charge of the Manila North and South cemeteries had tried to look for available spaces in the city's graveyards three years ago, but did not find any.

"It's too bad because the noncemetery project would benefit a lot of pet lovers in the city," the MSC administrator said.

Manila Mayor Lito Atienza, on the other hand, said the city government could allow the burial of pets within the premises of a family-owned cemetery lot. "Let's fix the cemeteries for human beings first," he added.

Animal welfare

In early 2005, the Manila City Council had approved on first reading an ordinance expropriating a piece of the Manila South Cemetery to the City for an animal hospital and a pet cemetery.

The ordinance, authored by Councilor Ciriaco Alfelor, allocated 5,000 square meters of the cemetery for the project.

Alfelor said the hospital would provide cremation services for pets of residents, while the cemetery would serve as a final resting place for dogs, cats and other domesticated animals.

The seven-termed politician, who is also a pet owner, justified the accommodations she planned to give to domesticated animals, saying that "Di pinatay gumawa si pet owners ng mga batas [Pets are not killed to make laws]."

However, the ordinance was never passed.

Defer legal action on graft raps, asks Binay's wife

By Norman Bordadora
Inquirer Southern Luzon Bureau

THE WIFE OF MAKATI MAYOR Jejomar Binay has asked the Ombudsman not to file charges, which have jurisdiction over the graft charges filed against her, to defer all proceedings pending the resolution of her motion for reconsideration before the Ombudsman that denied probable cause to indict her.

Dr. Elenita Binay, who took over from her husband as Makati mayor from 1998 to 2001, had been charged in connection with allegations that she, her husband and several other city officials purchased overpriced furniture and fixtures for the new City Hall from 1999 to 2001.

Elenita filed the motion after the Sandiganbayan Third Division on Tuesday dismissed the graft case against her husband regarding the same set of allegations.

Probable cause

She asked the antigraft court to suspend all proceedings in the case filed against her, including "the determination of probable cause and the issuance of a warrant of arrest."

The graft cases against the Binays were raffled off to the Sandiganbayan First Division.

Reinvestigation

The case against the Makati mayor was placed in the jurisdiction of the Third Division chaired by Associate Justice Godardo Jacinto.

The court had dismissed the case for lack of probable cause.

In her motion, Elenita also asked the court to direct the Ombudsman to conduct a reinvestigation of the graft allegations initially raised by former Makati Vice Mayor Roberto Brillantes, a political rival of the incumbent mayor.

THE TOMB of Manila's sixteenth archbishop, Jaime Cardinal Sin, is located in a crypt beneath the altar of the Manila Cathedral.

Cathedral underground reserved for archbishops

By Cyril L. Bonabonta
Inquirer Research

BEYOND HE DIED ON JUNE 21 last year, Jaime Cardinal Sin visited and prayed over a tomb located under the main altar of the Manila Cathedral in Intramuros. But this particular tomb did not contain the remains of a beloved son, or someone whom the land admired deeply. It was empty, for it was his own.

"Cardinal Sin personally chose this spot as his burial place," said Jude Villanueva, the church oversees coordinator.

The concrete tomb, which measures seven feet deep and 2.30 meters long, is located in an alcove which contains murals of grapes—that of Infanta Reyes, the first Filipino archbishop of Manila. Right across are the murals of Sin Guy's past archbishops, Michael O'Doherty and Rufino Cardinal Santos, the first Filipino cardinal.

The tombs are located in a crypt patterned after that of St. Peter's Basilica in Rome, where the popes have been buried.

The underground chamber in Manila Cathedral was built in 1958 to become the exclusive resting place of the city's archbishops.

Villanueva explained that the cathedral forged an agreement with the family of the current Manila archbishop that upon his death, his body would be buried in the crypt.

"Archbishop Emeritus Cardinal Bondoc has already chosen the crash beside that of Cardinal Sin. After blessing Cardinal Sin's tomb on the Latter's first death anniversary Cardinal Bondoc also blessed his own," she said.

Last year, Sin died at the age of 76 of complications due to kidney problems and diabetes late. He headed the archdiocese of Manila for from 1974 to 2003. His death was mourned by both FIDs and ordinary people who recognized his role in ousting Ferdinand Marcos and Joseph Estrada from the presidency through two peaceful revolutions, first in 1986 and then in 2001.

Sin was given full state and military honors, including a 21-gun salute, during his funeral on June 28, 2005. When his body was taken to his final resting place, only 26 persons, among them his family, friends and key members of the clergy were allowed inside the crypt.

His dark mahogany casket was lowered into the vaults by six pallbearers from the Villa San Miguel home in Mandaluyong City.

More than a year after his death, Sin's tomb has been visited regularly by his family and close friends, like protégé Balangao Bishop Socrates "Soc" Villegas and Father Ruffus Jimenez, the cardinal's private secretary for seven years.

"Bishop Soc says a private Mass for Cardinal Sin every time he visits," Villanueva said. Retired President Corazon Aquino (who was catapulted to the presidency by the first People Power Revolution) is also a regular visitor.

Other visitors included seminarians from the provinces and even from other countries like Korea and Poland, Villanueva added.

JUDE Cardinal Sin

Sanctuary for unborn at South Cemetery

By Tarra V. Quismundo
Inquirer Research

INSIDE A MODEST MAUSOLEUM, the unborn have found their place of honor in one month.

By the gates of the Manila South Cemetery in Makati City is a facility for those who never got the chance to live outside the womb. The high-ceilinged chapel-like structure called Heaven for the Angels.

A project of the Manila City government, Heaven for the Angels opened in February 2005 to give solemn babies the burial they deserve, for free.

Open space

A hundred-odd of Manila Mayor Lito Atienza's trademark pro-life architecture, the sanctuary made use of an open space near the entrance of the 25-hectare city-run cemetery.

"This is where we bury those who suffered fetal deaths, abandoned babies recovered on the streets, or babies who died because they were born prematurely (stillbirth)," said Toni Torres, the cemetery's administrator.

Against the white wall of the hexagonal mausoleum were built two columns of concrete niches, each eight stacks high and four columns wide.

Torres said each slot can accommodate up to 10 urnsare, which are placed inside bottles before they are buried.

In the middle of the entire is a mural of clouds with flowing streaks, complementing the cut-out figures of angels placed atop the tombs like guardians.

On the floor is another mural, that of the Holy Family, a fitting addition to the covered images watching over the infants in their covered sleep.

"Each letter brought here is recorded so that we would have a reference in case there are claims who come ... because there are some babies who have parents who visit them," Torres said in an interview the other day.

Markers

The facility currently houses 60 "angels," though just one of the 25 burials so far took place yesterday. Only two of the niches have flowers given by their loved ones.

After five years, a burial form is retrieved and placed in a marble case so that we could give others who need to be buried a chance," Torres said.

Heaven for the Angels will be undergoing repairs soon, as part of the rolling was damaged due to heavy rains brought by Typhoon "Milenyo." Water that seeped in also stained part of the sculptures meant to push off.

Metro Briefs

Fire burns 3 houses

FIRE(S) burned seven (one) where a small fire till a residential area in Malabon City early yesterday. Metro Manila and his family left their two-story wooden house before 5 a.m. Bureau Fire Protection (BFP) Malabon City Fire Station (Malabon) Firefighters yesterday morning say road to bring to the cemetery. But when they came back, the house had already been razed to the ground. BFP Asst Supt Leonardo Mercado. The fire began at 1:20 a.m. in the ground floor of the house at the corner of Tambirino and Bonifacio Streets. Because the house was part of a row of apartment-style houses, the fire also quickly spread to the two houses beside them. Firefighters promptly arrived at the area and managed to put out the fire half an hour later. Nobody was injured in the incident.

Tarra V. Quismundo

P1-M property lost

A 60-SQM(?) studio and a two-story apartment in Taguig City yesterday with some P1-million worth of property's going up in smoke. The blaze, began at 10 a.m. in the unit occupied by Perry Castillo at Phase II, Pinagsama Village. According to building owner Benjamin Sabellina, Castillo's unit had accidentally set on fire when Bureau investigators said that a candle could have triggered the fire that reached the roof. Due to it, four families were left homeless but there were no reports of injuries after the incident, said the investigator SPO1 Douglas Medrano.

Jocelyn R. Uy

Man electrocuted

A 20-YEAR-OLD mason was electrocuted when he tried to hide using an electrical wire in Valenzuela yesterday. The victim, police chief Supt. Billy Belmonte said that investigation showed that Ryan Pascual was accidentally touched the live wire as he was using a metal rod was dipped into a creek in Bulacan. Belmonte said the victim was standing near a bare live wire when the incident happened. "We still have to conduct an autopsy on the victim but we still don't know exactly what happened because there were no witnesses," he added.

Ramon E. Corujo

Did you know

THE SAN FERNANDO Manila Public Cemetery houses the only known Jewish cemetery in the country which opened in 1920's. Each tombstone in the Jewish cemetery is marked by a Star of David. The Public Cemetery also has spaces for Freemasons, aborted fetuses and abandoned dead bodies. Buried in the cemetery which opened in 1906 are former Presidents Ramon Magsaysay, Manuel Roxas and Sergio Osmeña and Speaker Cirilo R. Roces, artist Anastasia S. Fernandez, composer Julio Baltazar, boxing champion Pancho Villa and actor Fernando Poe Jr.

Cyril L. Bonabonta
Inquirer Research

All about ghosts and other eerie tales

ON TARGET
Ramon Tulfo

ADELCHARACTER: A MAYOR'S BEAT

At Bruno's Barbers on Julia Vargas St., Ortigas Complex, Pasig City, received a missed call from retired Gen. Cesar Nazareno at 11 a.m. on Tuesday.

Nazareno was a regular customer at Bruno's and Tesoro'd used to give the former chief of the Philippine National Police (PNP) a manicure while he was having a haircut.

When Domondi called Nazareno's number, there was no answer. He was expecting her regular customer that day as he had made a prior appointment with her.

At last, Domondi said, the retired general, a very jolly man in retirement but who was a stern disciplinarian when he was still in the service, had called from Dasmariñas City two days before to make the appointment.

Nazareno was still very much a general even when he was already a civilian.

He didn't want to wait while his bodies and manicurist were attending to other customers. That's why he would call days in advance to say that he was coming.

I was at Bruno's Tuesday early afternoon for my haircut. Domondi was doing my nails.

She said she was surprised Nazareno didn't show up for his regular manicure that day as he had made a prior appointment with her.

At last, Domondi said, the retired general, a very jolly man in retirement but who was a stern disciplinarian when he was still in the service, had called from Dasmariñas City two days before to set up dalawang misyon! call sa Aeropuerto Dyan'kil na! because I got two missed calls from him a while ago," Domondi said.

She then showed me two missed calls registered on her cell phone from Gen. Nazareno.

Nazareno died of an aneurysm at the Medical City on Monday.

The "missed calls" Chel Domondi received on Tuesday was a way of telling her that he couldn't make it to his appointment.

To paraphrase Shakespeare: But, Adel Domondi, there are many things in this world that cannot be explained.

How can you explain the piano playing by itself at the National Press Club last many years ago in full view of astonished newsmen, who were hanging out there at that time?

Rolando (I forget her family name) was the regular pianist at the NPC bar and restaurant.

One performed every night almost without fail for many years to journalists who drank beer or sipped gin tonic before going home.

One day, we found out that Rolando had died.

A few days after she was buried, the piano she had used for many years played all by itself.

* * *

Several years ago, I went my customary rounds at the "haunting" balay Tallo?" TV show to take shots of bombs in the South Cemetery for our Halloween presentation. Bad fell on a Saturday. Saturday was the shutting of the debate: "Incombong."

While the cameramen were taking shots of the symbol of children, several figures that appeared to be that of youngsters passed in front of the camera.

The figures were transparent, meaning the camera could see through them. The camera couldn't focus on the figures.

The cameramen got scared and ran away.

"Incombong" was able to show the moving figures of children in that Halloween presentation.

If these figures were not ghosts, then what were they?

Low turnout at Metro cemeteries

Front page A-17

Inside the sprawling 114-ha Manila Memorial Park in Sucat, Parañaque City resident observation piled with customary gusto.

City police chief Supt. Ronald Rifillen placed the crowd size at between 70,000 to 150,000, which was smaller compared to the estimated 240,000 last year.

"The crowd was smaller this year because only five [more pre-claimed a holiday. People opted to visit the graves of their dead loved ones last weekend," he said.

The roads inside the park were lined with the stalls of hardfood vendors selling pizzas, hotdog, ice cream, milk shakes, burgers and drinks.

Not to be outdone, ambulant vendors, who were not allowed inside, also put up stalls near the park entrance.

Their merchandise ranged from bottled peanuts, flowers, candles and fresh fishes of the more enterprising ones left their stalls and peddled their wares to motorists caught in heavy traffic on Dr. Santos road.

No untoward incidents were reported although victims pan-ened when a pedestrian caught fire shortly after noon. No one was injured in the incident.

Surprisingly enough, no one died in the traffic or fatal accidents such as deadly weapons. Apart as uneven into the cemetery even at the nearby Loyola Memorial Park and the public cemetery in Pateros, Barangay San Olympian.

"It just shows that people are more cooperative and aware of the law now," Rifillen said.

The was not the case, however, at the Manila North Cemetery Bynoon, city police chief Senior Supt. Danilo Abutazar said his men had confiscated a "minimal" number of bladed weapons.

The day before, however, policemen manning the gates had seized around 100 "armaments" which included garden shears, ice and butcher knives and jungle bolos.

Most cases yesterday there was an estimated 250,000 people inside the cemetery, the largest in the city. City administrator Dino Rubio, however, said this year's figure was lower compared to 2003.

The crowd inside the cemetery was better with families setting up makeshift tents and tables laden with food.

"We only do this once a year and it's a time when all members of the family can gather for a reunion," said Leilani de los Angeles, who last week up after spending the night at her father's tomb.

Fans of the late action star Fernando Poe Jr. visited his grave, not just to pay their respects but also in the hope of catching a glimpse of other movie personalities they were expecting to drop by, like his wife, Susan Roces.

Another, meanwhile, complained of poor solar. Mobile Services, who sold candles, said that by noontime, she had only sold P200 worth of candles compared to P1,200 last year.

"Nobody's buying candles in the park. The ones I sold were the cheapest ones," she said.

Linda Vergara, a soft drinks vendor, said that people were buying water instead of ice water.

"I think that people are really hard up this year," vendor painter Lorenzo Rosale said. "My dinner are rich but today they begged off from hiring my services. They said they did not have enough money."

With Jocelyn R. Uy, Margaux C. Ortiz, Ki Rga and Nancy C. Carvajal

Rumsfeld OKs troop buildup

WASHINGTON—US DEFENSE Secretary Donald Rumsfeld Tuesday endorsed a proposal by Iraq and US military commanders to increase the size of the Iraqi security forces beyond 325,000, and senior officers in Iraq said the increase will be in place by mid-2007.

The proposed force would bring to about 353,000 the total number of Iraqi troops and police trained and equipped by the US since the fall of Saddam Hussein in 2003. The Iraqi government has said it wants to increase the force to 400,000 troops.

Rumsfeld said he was confident the Iraqi government would be able to meet the goal. Iraqi security forces would be added to a force that now stands at about 319,000 and had been slated to grow to 325,000.

The 353 full-time progress (CBS) News reported Monday that General George Casey, the commander of US forces in Iraq, was expected to recommend an increase to the size of the Iraqi force to 400,000 troops.

But Pentagon officials who spoke on condition of anonymity said the increase is a decision to move from a goal of 325,000 forces, which would require to have soon- or 32,500 troops. They said the 400,000 figure was too high.

Rumsfeld said the proposals were made by the Iraqi government and Casey along with Lieutenant General Martin Dempsey, the US general in charge of training the Iraqi security forces.

"I am very comfortable with the increases, they have prepared and the acceleration in achieving some of those targets that they have proposed," Rumsfeld told reporters. "And I understand that the Iraqi government is as well." Therefore now it is simply a matter of our pressing forward and getting our portion of the budget up to Congress and working to see that it is executed," he said.

US money has long relied on standing up Iraqi forces to take over security duties from US and coalition troops, but the levels of violence and US and Iraqi casualties have risen sharply despite increases in the numbers of Iraqis in uniform.

US troop levels in Iraq this week hit 150,000, the highest it has been since January when the US force numbers peaked at the time of the elections.

Iraqi Prime Minister Nuri Al-Maliki has recently stated bluntly that Iraqi security forces are not well enough equipped and has pressed for direct control over Iraqi forces. AFP

Bush, Kerry trade barbs over Iraq

WASHINGTON—THE WHITE House and Sen. John Kerry traded fiery hardline accusations over the Democrat's remarks about the handling of the Iraq war Monday, with Kerry calling the president's aides "hacks who are willing to lie."

The war of words on Tuesday, just a week before national congressional elections, was fought over his remarks last Friday at campaign events. It came after Kerry told a group of California students on Monday that those unable to navigate the country's education system "get stuck in Iraq."

The two parties are searching for an edge amid lackluster Democratic recruiting efforts to win the House of Representatives and possibly take control of the Senate in next week's midterm legislative elections. Though senior Bush officials say it is not Kerry's intention to run for president in 2008 (he ran unsuccessfully against George W. Bush in 2004), Democratic candidates would be a competitive field.

Bush, campaigning here for Governor Jeb Bush's reelection bid, said Kerry's statement was "insulting and it is shameful."

"The members of the United States military are plenty smart and they are plenty brave and this notion that somehow they're not smart is an apology," Bush said during an appearance for reluctant Republican congressman, Mac Collins, who is trying to oust Democratic Rep. Jim Marshall. Three men were shot at the mention of Kerry's name and cheers of Bush-Collins' apologies.

Kerry, whose considering another run for the White House in 2008, angrily fired back.

At a hastily arranged news conference in Seattle, Kerry said: "I apologize to no one for my criticism of the president and of his broken policy."

Kerry said the comment in question was "a botched joke about the president and the president's people, and about the troops ... and they know that's what I was talking about."

A fiery spokeswoman, Jenn Brundage, said Kerry's proposed new bill had tabled the issue. "Do you know where you end up if you don't study, if you aren't smart, if you're intellectually lazy? You end up getting us stuck in a war in Iraq. Just ask President Bush."

Kerry's remarks came during a campaign rally for California Democratic gubernatorial candidate Phil Angelides. He then said: "You know, education, if you make the most of it, you study hard, you do your homework and you make an effort to be smart, you are able, if you don't, you get stuck in Iraq."

That, Kerry said, was meant as a reference to Bush, not the troops. Kerry said it is the president who owes US soldiers an apology—for "a war he got us into badly" that misled the country into war in Iraq, botched subsequently study and plan for the aftermath, but not properly equipped troops and has expanded the insurgent threat.

The ebb and flood of a bunch of disputable Republicans who will not debate real politics who avoid take responsibility for their own mistakes, standing up and trying to make others people the butt of those mistakes," he said. "A disgrace for that a bunch of these Republican hacks who've never worn the uniform of our country are willing to lie about those who did."

Embarrassed allegations about Kerry's Vietnam War heroism from a group called Swift Boat Vets and POWs figured prominently in the 2004 Kerry-Bush race.

In Iowa, a spokesman for Democratic congressional candidate Bruce Braley said Braley had decided independently to cancel an event with Kerry scheduled for Thursday. Braley, who is running against Republican Mike Whalen in the state's 1st District, said in a statement that the White House and Kerry should stop bickering and focus on how to change course in Iraq. AP

A WOMAN looks at the carnage at the spot where a suicide car bomber detonated near a recruiting agency in Baghdad, Iraq Nov. 1, killing 22 people, including nine children, and wounding 19 others. AP

OUTDOOR EXHIBIT: Visitors stand near the work "paint less faring," by New Zealand artist Graham Bennett at Sydney's Museum of Park Nov. 1. The work is part of the annual Sculptures by the Sea exhibition that runs along the Sandstone Bears Bondi Beach to Tamarama. AFP

Nasa gives Hubble telescope a new lease on life; repair set

WASHINGTON—NASA (ME) Tuesday it will launch a final space shuttle mission to keep the aging, trailblazing Hubble Space Telescope in orbit and operational.

The decision, announced by the chief of the US space agency Michael Griffin, followed a review of safety concerns and appeals from astronomers everywhere to extend the life of the Hubble.

Hubble's repair mission, which will likely be carried out in 2008, the telescope would clear clean in 2009 or even earlier.

Since it was launched into orbit 16 years ago, the telescope has helped astrophysicists peer deep into the universe, free of the distortion from the Earth's atmosphere.

Orbiting 575 kilometers above the Earth, the Hubble has enabled scientists to better measure the age and origins of the universe, observe distant supernovas, and identify and study bodies in and outside the solar system.

In 2004, it transmitted pictures of the most distant parts of the universe ever observed by visible light, "the deepest portrait of the visible universe ever achieved, by humankind," said the Space Telescope Science Institute.

Nine final scheduled missions for Hubble in 2002, but stopped it after the Columbia shuttle disintegrated while returning to Earth.

The accident raised serious safety questions for the Nasa space program, particularly after the shuttle's "heat shield" through a micrometeorite comes after nine of the last three shuttle missions were judged a success.

Griffin said the decision to go ahead was taken after painstaking reviews of safety issues.

"We're not going to risk a crew in order to do a Hubble mission," he told staff at Goddard Space Center in Maryland outside of Washington.

The National Aeronautics and Space Administration has said previously it was ready to refurbish the telescope as long as the current did not put the space shuttle crew in jeopardy.

The Hubble mission presents a challenge because the shuttle crew would not be able to seek refuge aboard the orbiting International Space Station if a serious problem arose.

Nasa also is faced with a busy schedule of launches of US astronauts to finish building the space station before retiring the entire shuttle program in 2010, a four mission per year.

A Hubble mission would likely be on the early 2008 and would require a special shuttle to remain in the event for any rescue mission should the crew have an emergency. AFP

Red Cross to streamline board's management role

THE AMERICAN RED CROSS, which has come under fire for its response to Hurricane Katrina, announced plans Monday to cut back dramatically the role of management with 45 to 50 member board.

Many of the changes will require the approval of Congress, which has chartered the Red Cross in 1900 and imposed its current board structure through amendments in 1947 two subsequent changes.

Should Congress approve the changes, the board would shrink to 12 to 20 members and the chair would no longer be the "principal officer."

The congressionally mandated designation has complicated the relationship between the board and the chief executive officer for years. In addition, the chief executive would report directly to the board, and what is chairmen would have new statutory responsibilities.

Critics of the Red Cross, including reports on nonprofit organizations, former leaders and board members, have lashed its board and governance practices for many of the problems. They said the board was unwieldy, overly influenced by the 21 members elected by local chapters, and too big to move quickly and efficiently.

The restructuring, follows pressure from Sen. Charles E. Grassley, the Iowa Republican who is chair of the Senate Finance Committee, like many of his colleagues, Grassley was upset by the Red Cross response to Hurricane Katrina.

The organization was criticized for being drawn from the flood-plains most directly affected, its shortsighting debit cards that did not work and for making Americans fill out paperwork rather than just complete. NYT

South Africa's apartheid-era premier Botha dies

JOHANNESBURG—FORMER President PW Botha, who defied world opinion while leading South Africa during the apartheid era for more than five decades, died at his home on Tuesday at the age of 90.

Botha developed many possibilities by his deep part after 4 p.m. at his home in the town of Wilderness in the Western Cape, according to members of his staff and family friends.

Botha died at home, peacefully" one of his security officers, Tobie Lamm, told the SAPA news agency.

Botha, nicknamed the "Great Crocodile" (Afrikaans for the "Great Crocodile") for his tough and uncompromising stance on politics, led white minority rule of South Africa between 1978 and 1989.

He first entered parliament as MP for the coastal town of George in 1948, when the National Party 1989 took power in South Africa, marking the official start of apartheid.

Botha, a scandal forced the resignation of then prime minister John Vorster in 1978. Botha clipped into his shoes, winning on a split vote with his party.

He quickly moved to impose a strict grip on political power called "total strategy" (Afrikaans for "using force to achieve political goals").

He defied the world during the turbulent and violence-wracked period and ruined a deal on to bring international trade sanctions of the business of the apartheid system.

The National Party leader eased down in favor of FW de Klerk rule later entered South Africa towards the country's first multi-racial elections in 1994 and won more than Nelson Mandela's African National Congress (ANC).

The National Party has since folded and its last leader, Marthinus van Schalkwyk, is now a member of the ANC government.

Even in retirement, Botha re-

BOTHA AP

mained his defiant streak and refused to appear before the country's Truth and Reconciliation which implicated former human rights violations.

The commission found Botha personally ordered the bombing of the anti-apartheid South African Council of Churches' headquarters and that under the strictest State Security Council, issued orders using language which usually frame in response or authorization to all government opponents.

But in June 1998, Botha won an appeal against the conviction for failing to heed the subpoena, ruling he was "ordered by the decision." During a controversial interview ahead of his 90th birthday earlier this year, Botha said South Africa would have "gone down the drain" if it had achieved democracy in the 1960s and 1970s.

Botha's successor ruled for only one term, he could not have never regarded blacks as inferior because "many blacks and colored ruled [sic] cooperated with us." The ANC, which has ruled South Africa since 1994, expressed its condolences over the death of its onetime arch-enemy.

"The ANC within his family strength and comfort at this difficult time," it said in a statement.

Adriaan Vlok, who served as law and order minister under Botha, spoke of his sorrow at the news of his former leader's death. AFP

MEN ASIA HERALD Tribune, the national daily of Laos, has signed an agreement to provide News Network as its first associate member. AFP is an alliance of leading newspapers in Asia. Its members include The Straits Times of Singapore, The Nation of Thailand and The Philippine Daily Inquirer. Tan Sri Esmee Zainuddin (left), editor-in-chief of Financier Times, shakes hands with Pun Sarasin (left), executive director of AHN and president of The Nation, at the signing ceremony in Singapore recently.

WORLD BRIEFS

Floods kill 21 in Turkey

ISTANBUL—Flash floods caused by torrential rain have killed 21 people across southeast Turkey, triggering a major rescue operation, officials said on Wednesday. Four more people died when floods caused some of the worst damage in the province. The driver and three passengers managed to escape. Another three people were killed in Diyarbakir province when a bridge collapsed because of heavy rain overnight swept away many vehicles. Six people are still missing from Batman province, and border regions that area also affected by torrential flooding, bringing to safety 500 people stranded in their homes. REUTERS

Sadat's nephew gets 1 year

CAIRO—A court on Tuesday sentenced the nephew of Egypt's late President Anwar Sadat to one year in prison for defamation, after he and his family members took to publication as he ran for speaker government office. In an unusually rapid proceedings, Talaat Sadat, 52, was convicted of defaming the Egyptian ex-ruler because he sang in a television interview earlier this month that unwanted genocide had happened. He was also convicted on a charge of insulting Hosni Mubarak, the country's president. Sadat's supporters celebrated the court verdict. "This is injustice!" "This is criminal!" chanted the two-time prominent political opponent of the president to be pardoned for a prison within 72 months. AP

Israel president hospitalized

JERUSALEM—Israeli President Moshe Katsav, under police investigation for rape and other serious allegations, was taken to a Jerusalem hospital for heart examinations on Wednesday, his office said. Katsav, 61, was admitted to the Hadassah Hospital Ein Kerem after complaining of chest pains, his office said. Spokesperson Ayelet Frisch said the president's office could not be reached for comment. The state said Katsav, 61, was taken to Jerusalem's Hadassah Hospital Ein Kerem after complaining of chest pains but that doctors said he was not in danger. Katsav has been under investigation for rape and sexual harassment allegations since July. He has denied any wrongdoing. AP

Iraq wedding bomb kills 23

BAGHDAD—The death toll from a car bomb attack on an Iraqi wedding party has climbed to 23, an official said on Wednesday. The manager of the hospital that received the bodies said Wednesday. A car bomb exploded late Tuesday outside a family-run restaurant hosting a wedding reception in the west Baghdad district of Al-Jihad, killing the bride's party and injuring 45 others. Hospital officials said 43 people were killed in the blast—including 19 infants—and that another 19 were wounded. The bomb was detonated by remote control as the party of the celebrants exited the hotel. Sectarian violence between Shiite and Sunni Muslims since the US-led invasion in 2003 has killed tens of thousands of Iraqis. The violence recently spiked to more than 100 US troops and more than 40,000 Iraqi soldiers and police on the streets. AFP

The WORLD

Editor Lawrence B. Chanco

US wants North Korea talks to resume soonest

BEIJING—THE TOP US NUCLEAR NEGOTIATOR, fresh from securing the return of North Korea to disarmament talks, said Wednesday that the negotiations should start as early as possible.

US Assistant Secretary of State Christopher Hill cautioned that a full plan had to be in place for there to be any hope for progress in implementing an agreement reached in September 2005, in which the North pledged to abandon its nuclear programs in exchange for aid and security guarantees.

"We are really going to be guided by the need to get an early date, but also the need to come up with a very clear plan to allow us all to implement the agreement," Hill told reporters before leaving Beijing.

North Korea agreed Tuesday to rejoin six-nation nuclear disarmament talks in a surprise diplomatic breakthrough three weeks after the communist regime confirmed its first known nuclear test.

The talks—pressuring China, Japan, Russia, the United States and the two Koreas—are expected to start later this month or in December, but Hill said the Nov. 14-19 Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation forums in Vietnam would have to be taken into account when setting a date.

"I am very confident that we will have a date to get the talks going. Certainly the [APEC] March forward obligations was ready to get the talks going," he said.

North Korea said Wednesday that it agreed to return to the talks in an effort to get access to Russian construction funds and a vital source of hard currency for the impoverished and isolated communist nation.

North Korea also emphasized that a direct meeting with the US, on the sidelines of the multilateral negotiations on Tuesday in Beijing, had made the diplomatic breakthrough possible. US President George W. Bush, who has long shunned direct talks with Pyongyang, confirmed China's mediation of the agreement.

North Korea, stopping back from the provocative statements it has made since weathering its Oct. 9 nuclear test, said it hoped to resolve US financial restrictions at the talks.

The North has refused for the past year to return to the arms talks to wage over the US financial restrictions, which blacklisted a Macau bank where the regime held accounts.

US officials had sought to rally other countries to pressure the North Seoul doing business abroad, saying all financial ties to the regime must be suspended because of its being involved in counterfeiting and money-laundering.

The US has said that the financial issue was a matter of law enforcement separate from the nuclear talks, but Hill confirmed that the financial restrictions were discussed on Tuesday although he gave no details.

"We've had a good discussion with the North Koreans on that," he said. AP

NEWSPAPER salesman Pedro Arroyo waits for customers at his newspaper stand Oct. 31 in San Francisco, California. AFP

Democrats confident of capturing the House

WASHINGTON—AFTER A BIT-ter ride in the political wilderness, Democrats are beginning to predict confidently, if quietly, that they will take control of the House of Representatives in new media elections, and possibly emerge with a relatively robust majority.

The optimism coincides with a Republican retreat Tuesday in three costly, highly competitive races in Pennsylvania, Colorado and Ohio, as well as polls showing continued public dissatisfaction with President George W. Bush and the war in Iraq.

In addition, fundraising is soaring significantly stronger than two years ago, $9.961 million through Oct. 31. That represents an increase of more than 50 percent, and has allowed Democrats to launch last-campaign television advertising in several districts in recent days in an attempt to maximize their gains or minimize losses, Nov. 7.

To regain control of the 435-member House, Democrats need to gain 15 seats. In the 288 seats her Senate, they need six. All 435 House seats and 33 in the Senate are in play.

Mark Mellman, a Democratic pollster, said in an interview Democrats have never been in an election in which a president's approval rating was below 40 percent "and his party has not lost the 15 seats" that Democrats need to gain control of the seats. Bush's approval ratings have in the mid- to high 30s.

Despite the developments, Rep. Tommy Petkin, the Democratic leader, and Rep. Rahm Emanuel, head of the party's campaign committee, have told aides to avoid predictions of victory before the votes are counted.

Democrats are also cautious in public for the past 14 years can tell you that a week out, you've still got a long week ahead of you," said Bill Burton of the Democratic campaign committee. "Bad war are absolutely not ruling anything for granted."

Republicans, too, say that with a week of campaigning to go, Democrats are ill-advised to celebrate. They note there are extraordinary number of races remain very close, and say their Republican get out the vote operation will help pull enough of their candidates to victory to preserve their majority.

Karin Johanson, executive director of the congressional committee, told state group last week that Democrats this midterm they had locked up 10 of the 15 seats they need to prevail, according to memorandum from Emanuel.

But other officials and strategists with long experience in congressional campaigns have turned increasingly bullish about Democratic chances.

In an interview, Mellman said he wasn't counting victories before they occurred. At the same time, he said polls consistently by Democrats and Republicans alike found an hypothetical ballot issue other than race "outside the realm of historical experience." AP

Newspaper circulation continues to decline

THE CIRCULATION OF THE DAILY newspapers in the United States plunged over the last year in one of its sharpest declines in newer history, according to data released on Monday.

The slide continues a decades-long trend and adds to the woes of a mature industry already struggling with layoffs and facing the potential sale of some of its flagships.

Overall, average daily circulation dropped by 2.6 percent during the six month period ended Sept. 30, compared with the same period last year, according to an industry analysis of data released by the Audit Bureau of Circulations. Circulation for Sunday papers fell by 3.4 percent.

The figures appear to be the steepest in any comparable six-month period in at least 15 years. They come after the sale of the Knight Ridder newspaper this year and in the midst of a possible sale of the Tribune Co., whose assets include 11 newspapers. The circulation losses also follow recent new earnings reports, raising questions about why anyone would want to buy a newspaper now.

The losses have accelerated as the industry tries to adjust to the steady migration of readers and advertisers to the Internet.

Papers in major metropolitan areas, where most losses are seen by broadband, fared worse than those in smaller markets.

The Los Angeles Times lost eight percent of its daily readership and six percent on Sunday. The Boston Globe, owned by The New York Times Co., lost 6.7 percent of its daily circulation and almost 10 percent on Sunday.

The New York Times, one of the few big papers where circulation had held steady over the last five reporting periods, has about 1.5 percent of its circulation both daily and Sunday. The Washington Post's declines were nearly the same. The Wall Street Journal's daily paper fell by less than two percent but its Weekend Edition, which comes out on Saturday, reported a 6.7 percent drop.

As of Sept. 30, total circulation for the nation's dailies had dropped to 43.7 million. Daily circulation peaked in 1990, at 63.3 million.

Nonetheless, three billionaires in Los Angeles have said they are interested in buying The Los Angeles Times, which is owned by Tribune. Jack Welch, the former chief executive of General Electric, has teamed about buying The Globe, although The New York Times Co. has said it is not for sale. And others have expressed interest in papers elsewhere.

Prospective buyers are interested, in part, because despite their problems, newspapers generally still turn a profit and remain attractive to advertisers who want to reach a mass audience. Many papers have higher profit margins than the average for the S&P 500 company. AFP

Coup jitters hit Fiji

SUVA—Fijian troops drawn through the streets of Suva on Wednesday and took control of centers of communication based on unconfirmed, as public unrest and security fears on race amid fears of a military coup in the South Pacific nation.

Military chief Frank Bainimarama has threatened to have Prime Minister Laisenia Qarase to resign unless he drops controversial bills, one which will offer amnesty to some of those involved in a coup in 2000.

Police said troops forced their way onto a Suva school on Wednesday and illegally seized 7.5 tonnes of ammunition shipped from South Korea.

Police had refused to release the ammunition until the military guaranteed it would not be used against the government.

"There is nothing to be alarmed about," military spokesperson Major Neemi Leweni told Reuters earlier, adding the army were merely guarding the shipment of ammunition.

Fijian political leaders failed on Tuesday to meet Bainimarama, who is currently visiting troops in Australia, and talks between the two sides in the country's military remain deadlocked.

Bainimarama has warned he could stage a takeover if Qarase refuses to step down or drop the controversial bills.

Fiji has had a history of coups since independence from Britain in 1970, with the military seizing power in 1987, 2000 and 2006. AFP

Calorie restriction may retard aging

HOW DEPENDING, HOW IT'S used against, color the use in personal circle who is aging later gracefully.

In a laboratory at the Wisconsin National Primate Research Center, Mattison is hoisting about time's caprice the last 5 way. At 28, getting on for a thousandth laboratory Mattison is losing his hair, lagging a pounds and getting a face full of wrinkles.

But in the cage next on him, gleefully bounding at strangers, one of Mattison' lab-mates. Shaky is a picture of sturdy virility, although he is slightly older. This and hairy. Study steps preventing his smooth coat just long enough to precedes toward a proffered peanut treat.

Tempted with the same treat, Mattison does usually and extends a frail hand. "You can really see the difference," said Dr. Rafal Ozolinsa, an associate scientist at the center who cares for the animals.

What a visitor cannot see may be even more interesting. So is much of a simple lifestyle intervention, flashy and expensive like hair-restoration surgery, who is currently visiting troops in Australia, and with aid. days staging exercises and training the main army barracks. Bainimarama has warned he could stage a takeover if Qarase refuses to step down or drop the controversial bills.

Fiji has had a history of coups since independence from Britain in 1970, with the military seizing power in 1987, 2000 and 2006. AFP

Calorie restriction may retard aging

HOW DEPENDING, HOW IT'S used against, color the use in personal circle who is aging later gracefully.

In a laboratory at the Wisconsin National Primate Research Center, Mattison is hoisting about time's caprice the last 5 way. At 28, getting on for a thousandth laboratory Mattison is losing his hair, lagging a pounds and getting a face full of wrinkles.

But in the cage next on him, gleefully bounding at strangers, one of Mattison' lab-mates. Shaky is a picture of sturdy virility, although he is slightly older. This and hairy. Study steps preventing his smooth coat just long enough to precedes toward a proffered peanut treat.

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WHAT'S INSIDE

■ **Bulls douse cold** water on Heat celebration; Lakers turn back Suns /A23

SPORTS

Editor Teddyboy S. Molavela

Marquez-Jaca bout off anew

EBRI, Marquez throws a punch during a sparring session.

THE PLANNED FIGHT BETWEEN Jhonny Jaca and Mexican Juan Manuel Marquez was canceled yet again, this time on the Filipino's insulfoot more skeptical about the bouts making the 126-pound limit for the supposed Nov. 25 bout.

Marquez was supposed to defend his interim WBO featherweight title against Jaca, about four years after the latter defeated the Mexican by a unanimous decision for the WBO title in Bacnotan, La Union.

As it turned out, executives of Davao De la Salle's Golden Boy Promotions and Jaca's representatives were brainstorming over a deal for the Nov. 25 bout.

"I was thinking everything was already off, so I hadn't look for other ways to book a fight for my fighter, because it is my responsibility to give him a fight," said Eubal.

Golden Boy Promotions was already in full swings from hosting the Marquez-Jaca bout in a card set at the Stubhub Arena in Mexico, Texas.

Meanwhile, the WBO has directed Chi would reportedly dominate Fernando Montiel of Mexico to defend his title against top Filipino prospect 2 "The Dream" Gomez.

Deloitte Ben Pennisi Jr., which owns the promotional rights over Gomez, had reportedly talked Dec. 15 as the possible date for the Gomez-Montiel showdown in the Undercard.

The bout features the hard-hitting 27-year-old Montiel (32-2-1, 26 KOs), who hails from Los Mochis, Mexico, against the technically gifted Gomez (28-1-1, 16 KOs), the 24-year-old southpaw from Mandaue City.

Bi-directional WBO contenders Pero Milicevic, a top-notch fighter, reportedly ordered for the Montiel-Gomez bout to take place.

Also, Dennis Laurente of the Johnny Tapia Boxing Association (JTBA) lightweight title with eight defenses was left over-matched undefeated Somchai Kokietgym for Tuesday afternoon in Thailand. Salaya Lagumbay, contributor

Morales trainer blasts Roach

TIM CONE says not all of Alaska's current woes in the PBA Philippine Cup can be traced to the fall of Mike Cortez. ANDRE TAMAYO

A MEMBER OF ERIK MORALES' TRAINING team yesterday unleashed verbal jabs at Manny Pacquiao trainer Freddie Roach for mocking the team of experts surrounding the Mexican ring icon.

Marcelo Fernandez, Angel Heredia, one of the Velarde Sports Performance experts commissioned by Top Rank big boss Bob Arum to monitor Erik Morales' training, said the American trainer's domineering demeanor is why he quit.

"The negative comparison between traditional boxing conditioning and contemporary science is really black and white, and possibly detrimental to the future of boxing as a rigorous and developing sport," narrated Herrera in an interview with boxingscene.com.

Roach was recently quoted as saying that his old-school training techniques trumped the highly scientific approach of Velarde's team of certified experts.

"My grandson, Dante never uses so many people surrounds one man to make sure he sure as links," Roach commented after Morales stopped Israelite Iddin for the WBC's 30-day weigh-in.

"But sure are weights in, it was a Weight Watchers meeting," added Roach in the interview with the popular boxing website. "I don't know what Velarde has on his menu, but I just invite you on Nov. 18, Manny will be serving fish a steady diet of Wheaties for all eight long until he comes on stage."

Roach was referring to the physical Pacquiao will be using for the fight against Morales on Nov. 18, the third part of a popular trilogy featuring the two top super featherweights of the world.

Reports were also out that the Velarde magnate knew the secret of Morales' possible escape from training camp to observe the Halloween break.

"I have been in boxing for many years and never, never, have I heard of a training camp like this," told Roach. "The smart aleck boxing from Mexico, is that Morales' attempt have been because so alienating he almost ate a 600-page biography of Milton Berle(sic) last week."

Persons concerned by saying: "I have found that many successful homes actually respect science more than many will naming the dilmod coaches do. Also, cool scientists respect all the fabulous coaches and boxers out there, who make things happen against all odds. It's often a very tough job that practical and applied science can make easier and more consistent."

Persons the event a day at beach, saying, "the improved differences you will see on Nov. 18, is a direct result of accomplished opinion, saying coaches and a great boxer thinking ahead by embracing traditional know-how and progressive conditioning science." Andrew Lagumbay, contributor

Alaska still looking for form, answers

By Rhoning B. Castillo

IT WAS SUPPOSE TO BE JUST a routine drive and layup for Alaska's Mike Cortez.

But he landed in a bad way after Sta. Lucia's Medric Aquino contributed the foul.

There went history, the boys in for a holiday in Hawaii that honors every pre-season champion and solid PBA Philippine Cup favorites. Only are now by surprise tail-enders.

But talk to Tim Cone and he knows that the absence of his cornerstone Cortez is not the sole reason why the Aces are languishing in the team Royal Hugnatons is also on because of an injury and does has also contributed.

Hugnatons, the former star in the defunct RBA who managed four to seven points and six boards last season, has been out since the last four seasons because of an ACL tear, the same injury that struck out the first-round Games.

"We're just not getting it done," Cone said matter-of-factly. "I don't think that Mike's absence is the reason, we've just been playing the rough terms and we've not managed to get it done what we need to."

Alaska has lost to last five games, and the promise of entering the golden-century of the last decade is almost gone that qualifying to the playoffs of this long tournament seem more worse to feel as finished.

Cone used to coax one of the veterans' backcourts in the league with Cortez partnering former MVP Willie Miller. The combination which he hoped would take him at least to the finals that year.

But Miller has been handling the point guard's chores with the "Good Cop" defensively-sound for the rest of the season. The settled date of his return is sometime in May next year.

Cortez, the former top overall pick in the draft, tore an anterior cruciate ligament (ACL) and a lateral collateral ligament (LCL) of the same knee in that freefall dive against the Barako's' center.

The ACL tear cannot be surgically repaired until after the LCL heals naturally, meaning, Cortez cannot be treated until after another two months, according to Cone.

And that has left Cone, a believer

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This early, RP gearing up for SEAG defense

WINNING moments, such as the ones of swimmer Miguel Molina (top) and diver Sheila Mae Pierre, are what the Philippine hopes to replicate in 2007. INQUIRER

By Jane Navarro

THIS IS TURNING OUT TO BE AN ENDEAVOR SPORTS OFFICIALS are really serious about.

Just a month after the Asian Games, officials from the sports agencies will huddle closer to work for the country's defense of the Southeast Asian Games next October.

Commissioner Melvin Garcia of the Philippine Sports Commission said the joint task force of the PSC and the Philippine Olympic Committee would immediately be down the groundwork for the participation of Team Philippines in the SEAG.

The 2007 edition of the SEAG will be held in Thailand.

The Philippines hosted the biennial meet last year and wound up overall champions for the first time in the history of the SEAG, winning 113 gold, 84 silver and 94 bronze medals—more than double its haul of 49 (11-73-16 Brunei and Ho Chi Minh City in 2003.

According to Garcia, the task force will roll up its sleeves and plan how to maintain (and if) or top the Clarenian brood to assemble the most formidable team possible and break the spell of host country winning the overall title.

"We will take a short break after the Asian Games and then activate the SEA Games committee," said Garcia, the PSC's point man on national sports association affairs.

Garcia revealed that P40 million is the sum that would be needed for Team Philippines to match or even surpass its 113 gold-awarded haul in the last SEAG.

This early, he said, the PSC and the POC are already thinking of ways to market the country's SEAG slate and come up with the necessary funding.

"From what I heard, the Ben Cayetanos (Mike network's single most buck and support the national team," said Garcia.

Ayono helped the PSC and the POC raise the funding in the SEAG last year by encouraging donors of the huge corporations—three major sport behind the national team.

Pilipinas a shot in the arm from the First Gentleman, the participation of Team Philippines in the Doha, Qatar Asian Games set on Dec. 1-13 added solely on the P26-million budget allocated by the PSC.

The P26 million will cover the air fare, uniforms and allowances of the 321-man RP delegation since billeting and accommodations for athletes and officials in the Games Village are free.

Unlike in Doha, Garcia said Team Philippines would have to shell out money for every expenditure in the installed detail in the Thailand SEAG.

Agusan 'A' cops nat'l chess title

CAGAYAN DE ORO CITY—ACELMAN DEL JUR. A got the full point from Christian Ayono to subdue Dagohoy, 2.5-1.5, Tuesday and cop now the overall title in the National Inter-Province Chess team participation tournament at the Atrium of the Limketkai Mall here.

Ayono bested Rodolfo Colonia in their board four encounter to give Agusan-A, seeded only 12th, the clinching victory and the title worth P200,000.

Overall, Ayono finished with 6.5 points out of a possible eight as he helped Grandmaster Mark Paragua, who emerged board one top performer, to edge pre-tournament favorite Tagaytay City for the crown.

Paragua settled for a draw with IM Rolo Madera to finish with 7.5 points in nine games. Ramon Jan halved the point with Carlo Bonaagua and Rainer Lubag split the point with Eden Dasa in other matches.

Agusan-A's seventh notch was against two downs give it 16 match points, two points up on Tagaytay at Oak Grove Adventure.

Led by Tinagan Ebenezer's victory over Jayson Salubre, the Mister Standard Tolentino-backed Tagaytay edged Mission Occidental, 2.5-1.5, to finish with 14 points and the runner-up prize of P100,000.

Actually, both Agusan-A and Tagaytay finished with 24 points.

Antonio, who scored up with 6.5 points in eight games, drew with GM Eugene Torre, 7-0%, in their keenly awaited encounter in the Tagaytay Missionary Brotherhood match.

National Inter-Cities champion Carmond Gudiguin (at least 6 RP Grandmaster Norman Abelardo, Rogelio Lagrio Antonio Jr., Ll. Ll. while Rizal Province of MM Oliver Barbosa and Daniel Rhoda sidelined Bataan, 2.5-1.5, to share third with fourth places with 12 points.

Lagrio and Marlon Manliot provided the crucial victories for Carmond over Mikaela Orlina of A, beating Bernard Bitanjos and Steven Dag, respectively.

Jonathan Jaime with MM Rachiee Tabuñar to did Peter Rengo against Melvin Merlito.

Marlona downed IM Richard Bitoon and Marinduque Rapatid bested Reynaldo Quitorio for Rizal's lone victories.

Another RP encounter champion Dr. Jessy Mione stood the test for Tinaday by beating Divine on board two. The board four match between Arnel Rivero and Ferne Rico ended in a draw.

Ilocanos, led by Ilocano chief Jun and Claudio Salonga-Cruz, finished in a tie for fifth to 10th places. Marlon Bernardino, contributor

2 Pinoys crash out of World Pool draw

ISMAEL "ISAHEY" BUTO AND JEANGELINE Peñaloza of Cluzet respective championship matches and failed to maintain their runs in the World Pool championship qualifying tournament at the Star Billiard Center in Ilo-ilo Village, Quezon City.

Buto yielded to Taiwanese Ju Muan Chen, 4-9, as Tuesday's afternoon session while Nida blew a 2-0 rack lead and succumbed against Singaporean Tan Tiong Boon, 7-9, in the two-night session showing the foreigners once more that visitors to the ranks drew out five 4 at the Philippine International Convention Center (PICC) in Pasay City.

Ju is the 32nd Taiwanese qualifier after topping round seven.

The 39-year-old Buto, on the other hand, is the first player to break the monopoly of the Filipinos and Taiwanese in the qualifiers. But he's no stranger to high-level competition. He won a silver medal in 9-ball in the Asian Games of 1998 and is currently ranked No. 2 in Philippines.

Meanwhile, the qualification tournament resumed yesterday for the ninth and 10th round in the same venue. Five more are still up for grabs, with the addition of the remaining 16 players following the withdrawal of top French player from the main draw.

This comes to show the number of players who will be winning further through the point system. In all, 32 players will make it through the qualifiers. Aberdeen Bernardino, contributor

Iligan hosts Milo Marathon Sunday

PAEZAN Bugnosen edges Ernie Cain (14781) at the finish line to claim the title in the Milo Marathon 3K race for 15-21 years old in San Fernando City, La Union, last Sunday. Holding the former's tape are San Fernando City Mayor Mary Jane Ortega (left) and Councilor Pablo E. Ortega.

THE NINTH NATIONAL MILO Marathon makes its debut in Iligan City on Nov. 13 with more than 5,000 runners expected to join.

Events on top are the 3K, 5K and the 21K qualifying run of the women's biggest and longest-running Fun Run. The top three finishers and non-elite finishers in the 21K will advance to the national finals set on Dec. 10 in Metro Manila.

Runners in the 21K must be at least 18 years old on race day to be accommodated.

The 21K champions will each garner P10,000, the second and third placers will receive P6,000 and P4,000, respectively. Cash prizes, medals and trophies are also at stake in the 5K Fun run, 3K Kiddie run, Inspirational School marathon competition, inter-school running competition and short distance competition.

According to Milo Sports Events Executive Pet Gonzaga, a total of P450,000 will be given away in cash prizes on Sunday and another P50,000 for the on-the-spot raffle draw.

Nutrimed race organizer Rudy Biscocho is advising all participants to be at the starting area at 5 a.m. for check-in, limbering and audio-visual presentation of the Milo Marathon.

After the Iligan City leg, the annual marathon winds up its 39-leg season with stops in Dipolog City (Nov. 12), Legaspi City (Nov. 13), Cabanatuan City (Nov. 19) and Santiago City, Isabela (Nov. 26).

SPORTSWATCH

SJC stagfest: 103 fights today

SAN JUAN DEL MONTE, Bulacan—The Philippine Sports Commission (PSC) will host the Philippine Sports Commission Chairman's Cup Inter-Agency Games at the San Juan Gymnasium here today with 103 fights on the program.

The PSC-sponsored event will feature athletes from 10 government agencies in boxing, chess, billiards and snooker, bowling, darts, golf, karate, taekwondo, tennis, table tennis and wushu.

Action starts at 8 a.m. with the boxing competition, which will have 13 weight classes.

Chess will have its action at the Bulacan Capitol Gymnasium, billiards and snooker at the Bulacan Capitol Sports Complex, bowling at the Bowl Inn Alabang, darts at the Bulacan Capitol Gymnasium, golf at the Bulacan Golf Club, karate at the Bulacan Capitol Gymnasium, taekwondo at the Bulacan Capitol Gymnasium, tennis at the Bulacan Capitol Sports Complex, table tennis at the Bulacan Capitol Gymnasium and wushu at the Bulacan Capitol Gymnasium.

Battle of champs at LPC

THE BATTLE OF CHAMPIONS is going down again, since the heroics of Angeles resident, girls going at 21-yrs. entry of Lan Pilar Coliseum. Jerry Ramos, who holds the distinction of being a member of six-time groups the GSAP 2K4, WGA and PGAC roll boat this downtown hosted by Angeles Hospital in 1996. Apart from Ramos, only one other PGAC member is currently also doing so and are PGAs Pat de Guzman, Leo de Guzman and Dodie Gilmore. PGAP Ramos was and said PGAP veterans up Gov. Tony Nitz, Ray Briones and Daniel Jose. Any betting first entries are coming for Pilipino Airlines, Filipro Nava-Aquila, Bank Line, Phil Interbanks, Mayor Dennis Pineda, Gold Class, Plaza Mexico, Lito Ordinez, William Lessard Pasay Samal Golf (02) 8-1040 and 854-1000 for details.

BITSP CHOICE

Race 1—(2)Mayor Jun, (5)Sumanding Emah, (3)Dalandan Dagupan City, (1)Mayor Jun, (4)Mayor Jun

Race 2—(2)Mayor Jun, (5)Sumanding Emah, (3)Dalandan Dagupan City, (1)Mayor Jun, (4)Mayor Jun

Race 3—(2)Mayor Jun, (5)Sumanding Emah, (3)Dalandan Dagupan City, (1)Mayor Jun, (4)Mayor Jun

Race 4—(2)Mayor Jun, (5)Sumanding Emah, (3)Dalandan Dagupan City, (1)Mayor Jun, (4)Mayor Jun

Race 5—(2)Mayor Jun, (5)Sumanding Emah, (3)Dalandan Dagupan City, (1)Mayor Jun, (4)Mayor Jun

Race 6—(2)Mayor Jun, (5)Sumanding Emah, (3)Dalandan Dagupan City, (1)Mayor Jun, (4)Mayor Jun

All eyes on Winslow in AF3 Batangas leg

MOTOR JAMES WINSLOW HAS the inside track but he knows he will have to work doubly hard to be sure to annex the Asian Formula Three semi-crown this weekend at the Batangas Racing Circuit.

The multi-titled Inspiring I would have another flawless no-blot 1-2-3rd performance," Winslow said yesterday, referring to his five-race sweep last September at the Subic International circuit. He earlier completed four to notch lead.

"But everybody else, I know and bring on all kinds of maneuvers and failure or one crash can spell a lot of difference," Winslow added in his usually terse style.

Most practice runs will be held tomorrow before Race 15, originally set in Indonesia but canceled at the last minute due to an accident involving Indon Mentos footprints, a field-winning driver.

The results of Race 14 will be used in determining the grid positions for Race 15, meaning Winslow, of JK Motorsports, will start on Grid No. 1, followed by Race by of Speedtech duo and Indonesia. Ali Jackson of Asian Racing, who can find on the heels of the Bohol.

The qualifying session for Race 16 will be held Saturday afternoon, with the actual race set later.

The last two races are exclusively and will be without fare on Sunday. 11 for big contributions on top of the

TOP THREE drivers (from left to right) Filipino Ryan Ely, rank 1st Indonesian James Winslow and Indonesian Adimas Jackson flank the standings topper during the AF3 press conference. RONNIE DAYRIT

www.autoGP.net for regular updates.

Winslow leads the series with 215 points, with just 86 more points up for grabs. Jackson, racing more than a month after breaking his right hand in Iceland, is running second with 164 points, followed by Ely with 153.

As of yesterday, 14 drivers are scheduled to race, four of them—Bodo Brix, Michael Dominguez, Claudio Hil-Lugo of Baghdad and Jet Sir Hong of Macau—representing Team Goddard in the series.

Toby Alia Howard and Philip Bruzaus of Sweden are set to race alongside Ely at Speedtech Asia, while Gianluca Gallo, last year's AF3 Motorpoint partner in Rider Grabmueller a fellow Roman.

Winslow's previous partner, Gilles Rantzbuk, has abandoned to race racing because he was not satisfied with the performance of his car in Indonesia.

GOLDEN BOYS Amateur Boxing Association of the Philippines (Abap) president Manny Lopez congratulates the victorious RP Team that competed in the 23rd Sarangani Cup in Tampico, Federal. Lopez earlier handed out cash incentives to the Dela Salle boxers. The team members were Abap secretary general Rogelio Fortaleza, Lopez, Joan Tipon (54kg gold medal), Genaro Rosario (48kg silver), Francis Jones (57kg bronze), Dodie Boboso (64kg bronze), Vuddie Pada (51kg silver), coaches Mike Fabrocos and Patricio Bergo

AFTER winning championships for him, Bill Russell (left) lays his former coach to rest.

Simple farewell for Celtics' Red

FILE CHURCH, VIRGINIA—BASKETBALL great Bill Auerbach was hailed in a simple graveside ceremony on Tuesday, with Hall of Famers Bill Russell and John Thompson and NBA commissioner David Stern among those paying last respects.

About 200 family, friends and special guests attended the private burial for Auerbach at the King David Memorial Gardens in suburban Washington.

Auerbach, who won nine NBA titles with the Celtics as a coach and seven more as a general manager, died after a heart attack near his Washington home on Saturday at age 89.

"He had a great run," Stern said. "He found us into thinking it would never end."

At the family's request, the ceremony was took part in rebranding the one-on-one game.

Hunt said the service was appropriate for a man who was driven and other times, without much regard for fluff or ceremony.

"The most simplicity was more than what he would have wanted," he said.

Auerbach, who went 1204-938 in his 16 years with the Celtics as a coach and seven more as a general manager, died after a heart attack near his Washington home on Saturday at age 89.

"He had a great run," Stern said. "He found us into thinking it would never end."

At the family's request, the ceremony was

Trade was Lordy's will?

IT'S A GOOD IDEA, and there's no turning back.

However, reports of demoralization among some players could have caused Bad Boy management to feel remorse over the recent Lordy Tagada trade.

I said 'could have.' It's very possible those who may have been so regrets.

* * *

Indeed there have been talks that Lordy didn't want to be traded and that he was very sad to leave the team. **Believe he smashed his pay camera six years ago. He teammates reportedly were just as sad to see him go, which means they could be feeling some sort of remorsement towards management.**

That is not to say the bodyguy, considering the manner in which the Raiders lost to Sea Lanta last Oct. 25, and almost learned to unremember Bill, must two-days later, if maybe he the finals gamble of coach Yeng Guiao to roll the dice on Carlo Sharma, Warren Shaken and Rich Wrinkle.

Clearly, the Bamboo were not taking their regular dose of Bad Bull. They were lethargic, apathetic.

Talks have it that this listless brand of play was an expression of protest, in sympathy for Undersized Tagada.

* * *

As for luck at last season, I know for a fact that at least two teams that needed a shooter were eying for the services of the singer. I also know that the teams had made trade offers to Bad Bull which the latter had turned down without thinking twice.

That was how valuable Lordy was to the team at that time.

But things and people change.

Somewhere in the All-Filipino last year, the cager's game started to become as inconsistent as the flight of the rollercoaster that zooms up then plunges down, then zooms up again. And while he had always been very hardworking during practice sessions, his teammates noticed that he had become too eager to diligent.

"Still a trade was out of the question," said a Bamboo insider.

* * *

The decision to let go of Lordy was long in coming.

For awhile there, it looked like the cager was finee to stay. He had an excellent shoot to Gloria where he played brilliantly against Alaska, contributing in a big way to the Bad Bull victory. **[illegible]** But it was all downhill afterward by a second victory over San Miguel Beer, although he was hardly a factor in this match. He was never a factor again after the first game.

In their third assignment against Coke the Bamboo were crushed, relentlessly.

The turning point came when Lordy refused to suit up for the game against Barangay Ginebra last October 15, giving the excuse that his foot was injured.

Yeng however, would not hear of a sit out. He insisted that Lordy suit up.

The cager had no choice but to obey. But he did not play.

* * *

The following day an MRI was ordered on Lordy's supposedly injured foot. The result was shown to three different doctors who all concurred that there was nothing wrong with the body part.

Management reunited with all the members of the team on the planned trade. No one objected. It's their right to say who some people are now reserving. It's deeper than we can fathom," said the insider.

Does Bad Bull regret trading Tagada?

"According to his new teammates, silence is he was troubled by Lordy's sweet mid-land passing, despite his claim of a bee injury. He was ready for action as evidenced by his fast pause for his new team," related the insider.

"He told his teammates, 'Guys sya but conference pa ko dito.' Sun di ko sapat to do this," he said.

"Is that the way to talk about a team that has given him the breaks and material him over the years?"

Obviously, there are no regrets.

IN HUDDLE

Beth Cielo

No party in Miami

Bulls douse cold water on Heat celebration; Lakers turn back Suns

MIAMI, FLORIDA—KIRK HINRICH SCORED 15 OF HIS 26 points in a dynamic first half as the Chicago Bulls embarrassed Miami, 106-86, in the opening game of the 2006-07 National Basketball Association season on Tuesday.

Hot-shooting Chris Dalton added 30 points in just 36 minutes for the new-look Bulls, who used their defense sparked by potent offensive acquisition Ben Wallace to generate a 37-point second quarter that broke open the game and abruptly ended a celebration.

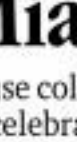
It was the worst season-opening loss by a defending champion, surpassing the 113-117 setback suffered by the Los Angeles Lakers in Golden State in 1961.

"We have a lot of guys that can create, create and shoot and also drive and kick," said Hinrich. "That will definitely be useful for us this year."

"The defense was carrying us, defense kept us in the game," Wallace said in a comfortable manner. Also of caution and energy to taken up in the ring ceremony and we seemed to come out and catch them off guard."

In the only other opening night game, Lakers star Kobe Bryant set out and Lamar Odom stepped up as Los Angeles defeated Phoenix 114-106 in a playoff rematch.

Bryant had out of the first round of the playoffs by Miami last spring. Chicago spent the offseason adding Ben Wallace to four-time Defensive Player of the Year—and although Tyson Thomas and Thabo Sefolosha to a young energetic roster.



HINRICH

Meanwhile, the Heat made very few changes since their starting combo from an 8-2 defeat against the Dallas Mavericks in the NBA Finals.

Their veterans group looked old and slow against the Bulls, who used all 12 players in the domino first half.

"It was absolutely unrelated," Miami coach Pat Riley said. "Iron a very cerebrum-running loss. They've got a lot to prove. They're hungry and they're very talented and [they're very committed." The consensus is in which Heat players, coaches and executives involved their reign from Dan-mmissioner David Stern before a championship banner was hoisted in the rafters of American Airlines Arena lasted 23 minutes.

After getting their rings, the Heat spent the first quarter running around in circles. They committed nine fouls—hers each by superstars Shaquille O'Neal and Dwyane Wade—and seven turnovers, digging a 22-14 hole.

It got worse in the second period, when the Bulls turned up their intensity defense and started making shots. Consecutive dunks by Thomas and Luol Deng capped a 12-2 spurt that made it 36-21 with 7:00 left.

In the first half, Miami had 18 fouls and 10 turnovers.

Meanwhile, Chicago shot 31 percent (22-of-39) from the field and held a 26-13 rebounding advantage.

The Heat got no closer than 22 points in the second half, which was marked by a steady stream of fans exiting early. The building was nearly three-quarters empty at the finalhorn.

"Whether or not this is an eye opener, I'm sure it is," Riley said. "We'll see how the players deal with it."

Odom scored 34 points and Andrew Bynum added 18 as his first career start at the Los Angeles Lakers erased a 75-point first-quarter deficit to post the victory.

"We must still re-unite," Odom said. "Jus drew got us going and we all followed from there."

Bynum's from earned 17 points for the Lakers, who snapped last year's first-round playoff series against the Suns when Bryant disappeared in the second half of a deciding game home.

The 106th leading scorer last season, Bynum was running on Tuesday, but this time he did not even risk rup. Bynum drove to the rim only some someone to his outgically repaired knee. -AFP

THE LAKERS' Luke Walton (left), Ronnie Turiaf (center) and Vladimir Radmanovic crowd the Suns' Boris Diaw (bottom) for the rebound.

Ekwe, Cruz spice up Silver Cup

SAMUEL EKWE, THE 6-foot-9 find from Nigeria, is going to need his mates to the PBL, but he won't be the lone big man to watch when the Silver Cup opens its doors.

The Nigerian will literally be in the middle of things for Magnolia, which adopted the reigning NCAA champion San Beda. Though ultimately he has a lot of things to work on, particularly his lax shooting around the basket, his defensive presence will be a force to reckon with for Magnolia.

And with Emile Rivis—a trans-the NFM Poachies is rejoining in its return to the PBL—adopting the reigning UAAP champion University of Santo Tomas Tigers, fans will be ranged against the preceding Ateneo Cup.

But things won't be as colors quite second Ekwe, only the second player since Cabby Espinas in the history of NCAA to win both the Rookie and MVP honors.

In fact, despite (fewer) presence, Bacal remains wary of the overall size of the team.

"We are a short team," said Bacal. "Even with him, if you compare us with other teams, they have a legitimate 7-foot [small forward] who stands at 6-foot-4 or 6-foot-5."

This is particularly true with Emile Rivis. Aside from Ekwe, other members of the squad are outrageous. Jojo Duncil, Dylan Ababon, Mark Cardus and Anthony Espiritu, who can create mismatches in the perimeter with their size.

Magnolia hopes the likes of Jonas Villanueva of FEU and UE's Rabelais Custodio will be enough to regain their rolling problems.

Emile Rivis will mark the return of Chris Tiu to the PBL. Jonas Joey Concepcion, Elmer Bringas and Pido Jarencio.

For Concepcion, the young and innovative owner of Food Care Concepcion, Inc., it's high time to rejoin the league which he helped nurture to become the country's premier amateur basketball league.

"The passion and desire of Mr. Concepcion for basketball has never diminished, as the decision to rejoin the league was easy," said Tiu. "Things will be with Concepcion formed one of the most successful partnerships in the league.

Jarencio has never had much success in the PBL, despite being one of the premiere gunners in the past, but he is confident the Tiger-power squad can pull off a few surprises.

"We have to adjust to the kind of game in the PBL because if we can't then nothing will happen on the court," he said. "But have to be prepared. We have to work hard. Then [the Tigers] are all going to be start from yesterday so they might as well start now."

SAN BEDA'S Ilan Rhee (top) and UST's Jerry Cruz will be among the top newcomers to watch out for in the Silver Cup.

Alaska still looking...

from page A11

a 3-1 lead in the semifinals against eventual champion Purefoods in the last Philippine Cup, encouraging coach Luigi Trillo to look for replacements. Even after the resignation of his team designer.

Finding a replacement would mean finding someone good enough to at least come to outfit the 14.3 points, 4.2 rebounds and league-best 7.6 assists per game that Cortez deserved on his last two short stints in Alaska.

Alaska has enlisted the services of free agent Dale Singson and has reactivated Rusty Hopkins in an effort to give Miller the same feel he had at practice and in the pre-season when Cortez was around.

But the Alaska coach has hinged to the past that the Triangle Offense, which made the Aces fall with 10 championships in the 1990s, is one tough system to learn.

And it could be the base why this team is groping for form.

Cone knows that the team needs to run around in this slide-step zone. The Aces are, after all, 1-6 at the moment and a full two games behind the spot if they plan to make it to semi-finals.

"I better [not go end to the losing streak]," Cone said, while making his way to his car and acknowledging some passionate statements from Alaska fans after losing to the defending champion Gherdan Giants Sunday night.

"Otherwise, I might not be here anymore."

Santos leads stat race

THE TODAY'S TOP DRAFT PICK AND THE player with the most hopes among the Philippine Basketball Association newcomers surprisingly failed to make the list of Rookie leaders in the Talk 'N Text Philippine Cup.

One month and 10 games into the season-opening tournament, Jeffy Williams, 26, Uncle Brooky's prolific forward, isn't among the top statistical leaders among freshmen. It is his, 2 pick Arwind Santos of FedEx who has been posting strong numbers.

Santos, the versatile quasi-forward out of De Lasalle U, is on top of the roster by leading all rookies in scoring (13.9), rebounding (9.4) and shot blocks (1.1).

Williams's pair of big guns in Jeaclon Cabatu and Jay-R Reyes surprisingly came in second and third in the scoring departments, with averages of 12.6 and 11.1, respectively, while no. 4 pick Lervis Alfred Thweeks of San Miguel shows the way to the rebound department (7.2) and assists department (2.7).

Also included Chris Tiongco of Coca-Cola is the best rookie in steals (1.2) while Sta. Lucia's Mark Isip tops the Class of '06 in field goal percentage (58.6 percent).

The 24-year old Williams, a graduate of Oakland University in Detroit, never made it to the top 50 list of any of the league's statistical categories. Currently, his worst contribution in the Rookies' campaign cannot be quantified.

Santos regulate the new-found vigor of the franchise, that is off to its finest start ever in the league with a tournament best 5-1 card.

SPORTS

Bata, Django pay their dues

WHAT SPEAKS "BASIC" BOXER AND FIGHTER to "Dinggo" Bustamante sans, they give something in return.

The billiards superstars were in Bureau of Internal Revenue Commissioner Jose Mario Buting on Tuesday to take advantage of the Collection Enhancement Program being implemented by the BIR to raise more revenues for the government.

Reyes and Bustamante avail an automatic computation of their earnings, the bulk of which came from international circuit, the past five years to avoid late penalties later on.

Though Reyes and Bustamante have earned thousands of dollars in prizes and appearance fees, the amount they need to pay to the BIR will not be astronomical since their prizes have been

REYES

BUSTAMANTE

dinged 30 percent taxes in the United States.

As such, they only need to pay around five percent taxes to the Philippine government to earn their income taxes, according to local billiards patron Atilano "Patch" Reyes, who accompanied them to the BIR.

Reyes said the $300,000 Reyes is bound to receive as champion of the recent 10th World 8-Ball Open tournament will be included in the tax declaration as soon as it is released.

Despite the delay in payment by IPT founder Gerry Tecklora, who reportedly is having difficulty meeting his financial obligations, Reyes remains confident that the amount will be paid within this month.

For another, a topnotch US lawyer informed Reyes' party that Trabaco's assets are more than enough to cover his liabilities.

Another concern for Reyes and Filipino pool players is IPT's swearing of the ring of the IOE Masters Championship and Tour Card tournaments for next year. Ray Gunter

On the green

240 players
60 competing teams
12 playing days
8 member clubs
5 world-class courses
3 nationwide legs
1 championship

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VISAYAS LEG
NOVEMBER 2 to 5, 2006

ALTA VISTA
CEBU

LUZON LEG December 7 to 10, 2006
Summit Point, Batangas
Orchard, Cavite (Player course)
Eagle Ridge, Cavite (Faldo course)

Philippine Airlines

Alta Vista Golf & Country Club plays host to Visayas leg of Sta. Lucia Golf Tour

For the second leg of the prestigious Sta. Lucia Golf Tour, 240 players will be taken to the challenging mountain course of Alta Vista Golf & Country Club. The golf course is a par 71, 18-hole championship course designed by Gary Player's Black Night Group of South Africa.

Cradled in the mountains of Pardo, Cebu City, Alta Vista Residential Estates and Golf and Country Club gives golfers a breathtaking view of the islands of Mactan and Bohol and the vast blue waters of Cebu Strait. A total of 78 hectares have been developed for this 400-lot prime residential cum leisure development community that places Cebu in the legion of the world's exclusive golf club destinations.

Alta Vista lot owners not only enjoy a hilltop residential subdivision overlooking the vastness of the city and sea, they also get proprietary membership shares in Alta Vista Golf & Country Club and Visitmar Residential Estates & Beach Club in Mactan Island. Clubhouse amenities include a fine dining restaurant, coffee shop and bar, 10-lane tenpin bowling alley, two covered tennis courts, a basketball court, swimming pool, and Spanish-type villa.

Alta Vista Residential Estates and Golf and Country Club is exclusively marketed by Asian Pacific Realty and Brokerage Corporation. For inquiries, please call 9112248, 9129493, 9129494 or Cebu +032 2334827.

ADV

IN THIS ISSUE
- **Meralco system** loss surges in Q3 /B2
- **Abaca firms** urged to diversify products /B3

BUSINESS
Editor Raul D. Marcelo • Assistant Editor Corrie S. Mariano

VAT collections up 65% to ₱103.75B

But BIR misses 9-month target slightly by 0.84%

By Michelle V. Rosos

THE BUREAU OF INTERNAL REVENUE MISSED SLIGHTLY its value-added tax collection target for the first nine months of the year.

Documents from the BIR showed that the revenue agency collected P103.75 billion in VAT revenues from January to September. While this was 0.84-percent lower than the target of P104.63 billion for the nine-month period, it was up by 65.3 percent from the P62.76 billion generated in the same period last year.

The year-on-year rise in VAT collections was largely attributed to the implementation of the VAT Reform Law, which basically increased the VAT rate to 12 percent from 10 percent and expanded the coverage of the tax to include previously exempted products like oil and electricity.

The VAT also increased the corporate income tax rate from 32 to 35 percent.

Fiscal authorities said the year-on-year rise in VAT collections reflected the efficiency of the expanded VAT law in achieving the goal of cleaning up revenue collection.

The measure, however, fell short to help the BIR meet its VAT collection target for the first nine months. The P104.63-billion target was 67-percent higher than the actual collection in the

VAT /B2

INQUIRER MONITOR

Figures that matter in our nation's life

Over half of visibly underemployed in agriculture (July 2006)

Of the 7.3 million underemployed persons registered in July 2006, over 4.4 million were visibly underemployed, or were working less than 40 hours a week. Of this number, more than 2.5 million belonged to the agriculture sector.

Source: National Statistics Office, July 2006
Data: Philippine Institute for Development Studies

Rudy V. Pedroso Inquirer Research

Bank operating costs in RP highest in East Asia

By Doris C. Dumlao

BANKS IN EAST ASIA ARE CONSIDERABLY stronger today than when the 1997 currency turmoil erupted, but operating costs are highest in the Philippines and Indonesia, data released in a regional report showed.

In its paper titled "An East Asian Renaissance: Ideas for Economic Growth," economists Indermit Gill and Homi Kharas, formerly with the banking consultancy Oxford Analytica, said the banking consolidation trend across the region, with the number of banks in each middle-income country falling even as domestic economic growth was recovering, with the exception of China.

"Another positive sign is that average state ownership in the top 10 banks has fallen, while average foreign ownership has risen. With these changes, the efficiency of the system has improved," the bank study said.

The World Bank said a measure of efficiency was the ratio of operating costs to total assets, which ranged at 1-2 percent for most countries in the region, with Hong Kong (China) banks having the lowest operating costs.

"Indonesia and the Philippines are exceptions with bank operating costs close to 3 percent of assets," the study said.

"The average operating cost of banks in the region, excluding the Philippines and Indonesia, were in par with their peers in Japan and Europe.

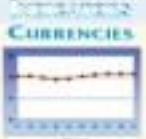
But while the average operating cost in the Philippines and Indonesia was above the regional average, it was on par with the average 3-percent operating cost of banks in the United States.

The World Bank said low operating costs have allowed banks to improve their financial stability and soundness.

On the other side of the ledger, the study said banks' corporate customers have likewise attained much healthier balance sheets than they did before the crisis.

BANK /B2

CURRENCIES



OCTOBER

PESO/DOLLAR RATE

₱ 49.04 = $1
as of 5 p.m., Oct. 31, 2006

$ 1.13 = ₱ 1
As of 5 p.m., Nov. 1, 2006

GOLD: $636.50-638.00
per troy ounce/Hong Kong, Nov. 1, 2006

STOCK MARKET

PSE COMPOSITE INDEX

(Decision market report in Pesigraphs)

Profit-taking seen

SHARE PRICES ARE EXPECTED TO RESUME an upturn trading session today as investors take a respite from market rise over straight days of rising.

FROM TRADING /B2

Weak healthcare system hits workers' productivity

By Dante G. Lucas

THE RELATIVELY LOW PRODUCTIVITY of the local economy is being aggravated by the country's weak healthcare system, which forces many people to pay for their medical needs from their own pockets, instead of through an efficient health insurance system.

According to Emmanuel Leyco, professor at the Asian Institute of Management, the vast majority of Filipinos approach medical needs on a "pay-as-you-go" basis, failing to take advantage of services provided by health management organizations (HMOs).

"The reason it is more expensive to get well because you have to pay at once to hell," he said. "The effect of this on workers productivity is huge."

Leyco heads AIM's health management program and has been advocating his reforms in the country's ailing healthcare system, which is mainly government funded through Philippine Health Insurance Corp. (Philhealth).

On the average, 55 percent of Filipinos' medical expenses are paid as "out-of-pocket" expenses, contributing to large shocks on their personal savings when they get sick, according to Leyco's calculations.

In contrast, the public or private healthcare systems pay for about two-thirds of total medical cost in advanced economies.

In the Philippines, Philhealth's share of the medical care burden accounts for only 16 percent of total costs, leaving it up to the individual to pay for the balance, according to the AIM professor.

"This is the most inefficient, and most expensive way of paying for healthcare," he said.

To remedy the situation, Leyco urged the government to take the lead in restructuring the healthcare system, starting with encouraging greater public membership in HMOs.

"Right now there is just not enough incentives for people to join in," he said, adding that the best solution to the situation is to make participation in the health insurance scheme, which still result in a large funding pool and eventually lower premiums, permanent and lower individual expenses.

He also urged the government to encourage more businesses to enroll their employees in HMOs by providing an incentive scheme for companies.

"At present, employers' HMO premiums are classified as operating expenses and charged to the employees' benefits," Leyco said, adding that a monetary incentive scheme, like tax deductions, will encourage firms to make HMO membership the norm rather than the exception.

Greater government focus on healthcare will also encourage more private sector firms to join the industry, leading to economies of scale which may lower the overall cost of healthcare eventually.

"The government is the most influential player in the healthcare system," the AIM professor said. "Obviously, there is strong demand for HMO services in this country."

Intel, Camiguin bakeshop share honors for 'green' operations

By Riza T. Olchondra

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo presents the 2006 El Amanecer Kyusay Award of Camiguin Bakeshop owners Dionisio and Virginia Jose.

THE COUNTRY'S BIGGEST BUSINESS organization has honored Intel Technology Philippines Inc. and food company Kinday Inc. of Camiguin Bakeshop for showing "outstanding environmental responsibility."

Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry (PCCI) president Donald G. Dee and president Dionisio de Reyes handed out the 2006 Excellence in Ecology and Economy Awards to the two companies during the 32nd Philippine Business Conference held at the Shangri-La Hotel.

Intel Technology Philippines was named winner for the Large Enterprise Category for its solid waste management and recycling programs.

The PCCI said that last year, Intel reduced its hazardous waste by around 10.8 tons, saving $2.5 million. At the same time, it recycled 70 percent of its solid waste totaling 1169 tons. The company has sold the recycled materials and earned $12,000.

Intel was also cited for its Intel Involved Community program, under which employees are encouraged to participate in activities focused on answering and managing the environment.

Vlandoy Bistol of Camiguin Bakeshop bagged the award for the Small Enterprise Category and was recognized for its initiatives to upgrade its facility by acquiring new equipment and implementing cleaner production activities.

Vlandoy is also training its employees on good housekeeping, housekeeping practices, food handling and other environment and safety programs.

"These companies deserve

INTEL /B2

Meralco system loss surges in Q3

Utility sees correction in 4th quarter

By Abigail L. Ho

THE LOPEZ-LED MANILA ELECTRIC Co. registered a system loss rate of 9.84 percent in the third quarter, almost 1 percentage point higher than in the same period last year, putting a dent on the company's goal of going below the 9.3-percent ceiling on recoverable system loss-related costs.

According to Meralco execs, the company achieved a system loss rate of 8.92 percent in the third quarter of 2005, enabling it to post a full-year system loss rate of 10.08 percent, the distribution utility's lowest in 10 years.

Meralco attributed the higher system loss rate it posted in the July-September period to "the increase in consumption as the latter part of the bulk energy billing cycle."

This, the distribution utility said, was not reflected in its overall sales since most meters have already been read at that time.

Meralco said those unreflected sales would be captured in the next billing period, resulting in a "correction in the future" by the fourth quarter.

Despite the system loss "deterioration" in the third quarter, Meralco said the 12-month moving system loss average as of end-September still managed to improve to 10.26 percent from 10.52 percent in the same period last year.

For this year, Meralco hopes to register a single-digit system loss rate and possibly even go lower than the mandated 9.3-percent cap.

"Our target is to reach 9.3 percent as soon as possible," Meralco president and chief operating officer Jesus Francisco said. "We hope to break into the single-digit level this year."

A lower system loss rate will be beneficial to distribution utilities such as Meralco, as every time they go beyond the 9.3-percent cap, they have to absorb the excess as losses because these can no longer be passed on to electricity consumers.

WET AND WOOLY
A rain-soaked crowder dad in woolen robe offers flowers for the dead, a route that traditionally ties in peak on All Saint's Day this Typhoon Paeng somehow dampened the flow of business in the customer capital, although it did not quite cool the spirits of aggressive hawkers eyeing to scoop their investments

Maynilad board OKs capital restructuring

By Christine A. Gaplicas

THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF Maynilad Water Services Inc. on Tuesday approved the capital restructuring agreement that would formally define the new valuation of company shares and reset the composition of the rehabilitation court and the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC).

Maynilad, now under receivership and under government control, forged the agreement with its creditors as part of the water firm's rehabilitation.

To calm the objections of minority shareholder Metro Pacific Investments Corp.'s Chabo Water Services, the board approved the capital restructuring to reset the Dec. 31 deadline of the rehabilitation court," Maynilad Board chair Oscar Garcia told the business.

According to Maynilad's designated creditor, lawyer Benedicto E. Bernardo, the new capital restructuring agreement will restate the valuation of the company's shares from par value of P100 to P1.

The agreement also provided for the transfer of Maynilad shares from Ayala Holdings to the government's Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System (MWSS).

The agreement is supposed to reduce the capital deficit of P43.4 billion and write off all of Benpres' and Ayala's existing valuation to creditors with $11.2 million and $55.19 million, respectively.

Bernardo explained that, as the new majority owner and creditor, the MWSS has the rights over 1,550 billion Class A shares, equivalent to 332.67 million Class B shares.

Ayala has objected to the capital restructuring agreement because it first wanted the new owner to waive it, Bernardo said.

"Some has not firmed up its place whether it would sell off its 16 percent stake in Maynilad," said Garcia, Maynilad's chair. "It has said in a letter to the Maynilad board that it would cooperate with the new owner."

Soon's decision threatened to delay Maynilad's submission of plans to the rehabilitation court—Quezon City Regional Trial Court Branch 94.

The court would first have to approve the agreement before Maynilad could file the document with the SEC. By then, Maynilad hopes that the new majority shareholder will have been selected, Soo adds said.

The submission of the final bids has been reset to Nov. 21. Under the terms of reference approved by Maynilad's board, the winning bidder will take over and continue operations of the asset zone for the remainder of the 25-year concession.

The winning bidder will also have to assume Maynilad's obligation under a "debt and capital restructuring agreement" with the MWSS.

Davao and Palau: Partners in business, tourism

DAVAO AND PALAU—TWO REgions with beautiful beaches and rich marine resources.

Palau is part of the Micronesian group of islands and is famous for its dive sites and beaches. Davao, on the other hand, is considered the largest city in the world at 244,000 hectares and is one of the fastest growing regions in the country.

According to a World Bank report, Palau's economy is sustained mainly by tourism and external assistance, with the public sector accounting for nearly half of total employment.

The tourism sector was adversely affected in 2000 by the sharp appreciation of the US dollar against the Japanese yen early that year. The limited flights and increased airfare.

However, tourist earnings rebounded by 26.2 percent in 2003 and another 7 percent in 2004. Efforts have been made recently to introduce competition among airlines and to diversify the tourist base.

A Philippine-based airline recently launched its service to Palau via Davao, and is looking to Palau's tourism industry and the rising number of Filipinos travelling Palau for work and leisure to sustain its services.

Palau is but emerging as a tourist destination despite several years Filipino workers (OFWs).

The Philippine Ambassador to Palau, Ramon de Mesa, reported that Filipinos make up over a fourth of the total population of Palau.

The country also gives competitive salary rates as domestic helpers in Palau receive a minimum wage of $250 a month. Filipinos in Palau also work in hotels, or are hired as domestic helpers, medical assistants, fishermen, agriculturists, construction workers, and even entertainers.

Recently, as 89-member delegation from the Republic of Palau, headed by Debbie Remengesau, the First Lady of the Republic of Palau, and several representatives from Ota Palau private sector arrived in Davao City to join the mission of forming diplomatic and economic relations with neighboring regions, and lead a series of weekend business meetings.

As part of strategy to develop Palau and Davao as emerging markets in the world economy, discussions were centered on the mutual marketing of goods and tourism promotions, and the possibility of establishing products directly to Palau from Davao.

Palau's economy is marked by a large trade deficit.

Food, beverages, and tobacco account for 10 percent of imports; manufactured goods, 20 percent; machinery and transportation equipment, 20 percent; mineral fuel and lubricants, 13 percent; and other imports, 20 percent.

The country's low volume and limited range of exports include shellfish, fruits, copra and garments. Palau's population has reached 20,000 as of a 2004 estimate.

Any progress in Palau's economy could directly affect Davao's economy as well.

Mayor Rodrigo Duterte said the partnership with Palau could be "endless," citing shipping, medical and educational opportunities.

The two areas have a lot of differences in economy, despite the disparity in the population.

Davao City's products that could be exported to Palau include durian, mango, pineapple, coconut, papaya, marine products (tuna, frozen scraped), manufactured goods (plywood, cement, grass in wires) and finished wood products.

Palau could also benefit greatly from Davao's well-trained medical professionals and good universities where Palauan students could study.

Palau is a young republic and it needs friends. The Philippines was among the first to establish diplomatic relationship with the Pacific island nation.

Another major industry that is being explored is fishing.

The Philippines and the Republic of Palau will hold talks around barging a formal fisheries agreement beneficial to both sides. An agreement between the two countries will allow fishermen from both countries to fish in each other's territorial waters without fear of apprehension.

By plane, Palau is just an hour and 30 minutes away from Davao. Although there is no ready market yet, the airline plying the Davao-Palau route believes that tourism will pick up in time.

The economic partnership between Palau and Davao has just started and it looks promising.

The agreement could usher to a new era of development in the new region complement each other. Given enough time, Palau and Davao could become fine partners in furnishing mutual economic growth and progress.

Didi Rigor-Ruiz is a strategy advocate for Mindanao chair, Mindanaowork Foundation Inc; CenCom and Charter Change Advocacy Commission member; chair of the Mindanao TREE; Mindanao Inc., Export Development Council; also, Jun Rigor Foundation; former chair of the Mindanao Business Council. Email comments to info@charter.com.

VAT . . .

From page B1

same period last year.

In September this year alone, VAT collection amounted to P9.35 billion. That was 27 percent lower than the goal of P12.77 billion for the month, but was 29 percent higher year-on-year.

Revenue Commissioner Jose Mario Buting said there should be a change in the way the government sees its tax collection targets. He said that aside from macroeconomic projections, such as GDP forecast, the BIR's actual capability and resources should also be taken into consideration when setting tax collection targets.

He said there should be some flexibility in the setting of targets, stressing that tax collection was dependent on the country's gross domestic product (GDP) or economic output.

He complained about the fact that while actual GDP did not always hit the government's target, the BIR's tax collection target was set made flexible together with the actual economic growth.

The BIR is struggling to meet its road tax collection goal of P575.4 billion for 2006. In the first nine months, the revenue agency collected P488.35 billion, or nearly P32 billion short of its P492.46-billion target.

However, a large part of the shortfall was one due to the BIR's poor performance last caused by declining interest rates and reduced issuance of treasury bills and bonds due, in turn, led to smaller taxes on interest from these investments in instruments.

Intel . . .

From page B1

shared innovative and outstanding environmental responsibility as part of management's customizable development strategy," Inte said.

Vice President Teddy de Castro, together with PCCI chair Miguel A. Zaretti and conference chair Edgardo G. Lacson, also presented special citations to Bank Chair Philippine Inc., Inc. Miguel Ruiz Banking Corp. and Toyota Motor Philippines Inc.

BSP grants quasi-banking licenses to investment houses, finance firms

Monetary Board lifts moratorium to help develop capital market

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE BANGKO SENTRAL NG Pilipinas has approved the granting of quasi-banking licenses to investment houses and finance companies in an attempt to boost the capital market.

Nestor Espenilla Jr., BSP deputy governor for bank supervision and examination, said it is binding that the policy was recently approved by Monetary Board.

A quasi-banking license allows an institution to borrow money from the public through the issuance of domestic debt securities like promissory notes and repurchase papers.

"This is to support the further development of the capital development market, which is an advocacy of the BSP. We'd like to promote better competition and better pricing," Espenilla explained.

But to engage in quasi-banking, he said the BSP had set certain requirements, such as minimum capital base of P500 million.

The BSP stopped investment houses and finance companies from engaging in quasi-banking activities in the 1980s after a number of firms went bankrupt.

"They almost bankrupted them, the public used unlike banks, they don't have a lender of last resort (Bangko Sentral)," a banking source said.

The BSP kept the moratorium, especially after the Asian currency turmoil of 1997.

"At that time, (the BSP didn't think they were) mature enough. They are acting like banks but they lack expertise and they are not insured (unlike the banking system's Philippine Deposit Insurance Corp.)," the source said.

With the BSP's lifting of the moratorium, non-banks would likely offer higher interest rates to attract more investors.

Applications for quasi-banking licenses are required to submit a comprehensive business-planning instrument program, including the planned distribution of publics, maturity interest rates as well as local or foreign money sources.

Abaca firms urged to diversify products

By Christine A. Gaylan

THE ABACA FIBER INDUSTRY has to come up with new products if it hopes to capture new markets, a major industry player said.

Despite being considered the world's top producer of abaca, local millers of abaca pulp are negative on export growth in the coming years due to the lack of new uses for the fiber.

An official of Seaweb Pulp Inc., reportedly the country's biggest abaca pulp miller...said the lack of new uses for abaca pulp, coupled with the lack of a commercial office from the private sector to market the product, were restricting the export of abaca pulp.

"The export of abaca pulp will still grow but a substantial one of about 2 to 3 percent every year," he said.

Meanwhile, now owned by an American firm, exports all of its abaca pulp to its parent company.

Last year, it exported 18,500 metric tons (MT). For this year, it projects exports to go up slightly to 19,000 MT.

The company official said the abaca pulp industry's exports could be higher if only the private sector would find new ways to market the product.

Bank operating costs in RP highest in East Asia

From page B1

"Central banks and healthy corporate balance sheets should be a recipe for solid growth and, for the reverse has happened in East Asia. The way in which banks have been improving their balance sheets has been by cutting back on credit, except in the best borrowers," the study said.

Meanwhile, the World Bank also noted that credit to the private sector was generally lower or not be expected as an increasing share of this credit was going to consumers or households rather than micro-entrepreneurs.

Consumer lending, however, was lowest in a series of total credit in the Philippines at only 10 percent as of 2006.

The study noted that during the comparison period, consumer lending accounted for 63 percent of total credit in Malaysia, 49 percent in Korea, 40.58 percent in Hong Kong (China) and Singapore, 38 percent in Indonesia, 17 percent in Thailand and 16 percent in China.

Profit-taking seen

From page B1

Analysts noted that the climb had been tempered on Tuesday by some profit-taking, although foreign buying could push some issues higher this week. Financial analysts never closed yesterday for a national holiday.

The benchmark 30-company Philippine Stock Exchange Index rose up 4.31 points, or 0.16 percent, to 2,708.30, after rising 6.45 percent over the last eight sessions, including Monday's 0.2 percent dip.

Among the major gainers have been stocks which reported healthy third-quarter profits and those which are expected to report sharp gains in income.

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HONDA

GOCCs post better deficit figures

By Michelle V. Rama

THE DEPARTMENT of Finance said that 14 government-owned and controlled corporations (GOCCs) are expected to post a combined budget deficit of around P50 billion for fiscal year 2006, better than the P47.3-billion target the authorities have set for the year.

A DOF official said that the expected better-than-programmed deficit is partly due to the declining interest rates, which reduced their spending for loan payments.

Other factors behind lower interest rates were the Bureau of Treasury Gains and the National Food Authority, the official said.

The DOF source said that in the first half of the year, the 14 GOCCs registered a consolidated deficit of P20.7 billion.

This was P12.3 billion lower than the P33.095 billion ceiling for the six-month period. The deficit of the GOCCs in the first half translated to "savings" for the government.

According to the DOF assessment, a total of P10.9 billion were actually "saved" from total first-quarter expenditures by Napocor, NIA, National Transmission Corp., Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System, and the Light Rail Transit Authority.

"Savings" here refers to the difference between the actual consolidated deficit and the programmed figure.

However, the P10.9-billion worth of gross "savings" was partly offset by accounts payables of Napocor and higher-than-expected implementation of the NIA-related subsidies for a net "savings" of P12.3-billion.

Of the P10.9 billion, P6.6 billion was released by the budget body, lower fuel cost, lower interest payments and lower capital expenditures by Napocor, Some P0.6 billion in "savings" was accounted for by lower borrowing cost for the National Food Authority, while the remaining P3.7 billion was due to the lower capital expenditures of Transco, MWSS and LRTA, the DOF said.

Because of the good financial showing of the GOCCs in the first half, their full-year deficit figures are seen to be around P50 billion or lower than the target of P67.4 billion, she said.

The other government firms being monitored by the government are the Local Water Utilities Administration, National Electrification Administration, Home Guaranty Corp., National Housing Authority, Philippine Ports Authority, Philippine Reclamation Co., National Irrigation Administration, National Development Co., Philippine Ports Authority, Philippine Economic Zone Authority and Philippine National Railways.

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■ A different 'ihaw-ihaw' resto /D3

LIFESTYLE

Like Chair Sand Furniture

If you know a little of its history, you won't be surprised that the Portuguese and the Chinese meet in the cuisine daily

Eating our way through Macau

By Micky Fonte

AS SOON AS WE LANDED IN Macau, we immediately took care of the business at hand. And that was exploring what this Special Autonomous Region of China had to offer, food-wise. It was my first visit and that first taste was exceptional.

An intense set-to down at O Manuel Lisboa Portugues, a light white Vinho Verde Andrada (Essex). It went well with the cheese, a quejicio Serra from north Portugal that melted into the hot crusty bread.

A salad followed, leafy greens topped with onions, cucumbers, bell peppers and tomatoes that were all marinated in vinegar and olive oil beforehand, a style seen again in another Portuguese restaurant at the end of our visit.

We were bedded with delicious stews that were buttery but had a concentration flavour (many chopped tomatoes known). We had grilled pork ribs, fried chicken, roasted pork and, my favorite, grilled sea bass, all accompanied by potatoes, fried or boiled, and a small salad.

With the meal we were given a sample red, a Cartuxa Epoise (Borrajo 2001), a wine I shall constantly search out for.

The restaurant is on the island of Taipa where the airport is (Free Ferries Shuttle). The owner, Joachim Manoel Pena, a O Manuel himself. Our guide for the next few days, João Salet, told us that "O" was the Portuguese way of calling someone, like our "Ate."

The quality of the food reprise of both the cooking and the freshness of ingredients. Manuel said he went daily to the Red Market that we checked out on our third day. The fish there were literally jumping and breathing.

The quality of the food must be the reason why there are three branches of O Manuel in Japan, with two more opening. But Manuel stays most of the time in Macau aided by his Filipino cook Bryant Custodio, who has been in the former Portuguese territory for 10 years.

Filipinos were everywhere. They were actually guards at the Macau Museum when the culture of food was well represented; a Filipino conducted the tasting at the Wine Museum. One night our tour guide singing and dancing with a Filipino band.

(AFTER) 11

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A HEALTHY future is 'sosa' in tea leaves.

The selection of 50 or so varieties covers practically the length and breadth of the world's most populous nation

CRISPY Eggplant

CBAR Hong Kong

Chinese geography in tea leaves

By Alice Y Vergara

DINING AT SHANGRI-LA Makati's Tea of Spring is like traipsing through the entire length and breadth of China, including Taiwan and Hainan.

Apart from offering traditional Chinese cuisine in unimpeachable portions, the restaurant's office sheets a long list of authentic teas (30-or-so varieties).

Every item on the tea menu comes directly from various regions of the Middle Kingdom. To make the tea-drinking experience as authentic as possible, the months-never hostel in Lo-hsi has hired the services of Chinese tea master Chan Chong Wan.

The Beijing native knows his stuff well and never fails to impress guests with his pouring skills using a metal teapot with a strainer-long spout. He makes it look so easy until it dawns on you the water is the teapot is hot.

With a Chinese-Filipino interpreter by his side, the fully-costumed Chan answers all sorts of questions concerning the restaurant's tea offerings. He may even conduct a class on tea-pouring 101.

Healthy beverage

Each tea not only possesses a distinct flavor but is believed to offer certain health benefits and healing properties. That's definitely one good reason to spoil ourselves.

The Wenlake Ming Chu Longjin from Hangzhou (near Shanghai), for instance, is loaded with vitamin C and acts as a powerful antioxidant to enhance clear fights disease-causing oxygen free radicals). Believe it or not, it can even strengthen cervix.

The crisp and fragrant Dongding Oolong from Taiwan, on the other hand, is an ideal ally in cleansing the body of cholesterol and various toxins. Its smooth and light fragrance is especially nice in lieu of Chinese cocktails after the meal.

Three with problem acne, listen up: for clear, pimple-free skin, you may want to try a cup or two of Everlasting Memories from Xin Jiang (northwestern China). The tea is a cocktail of osmanthus, rose and apple flower.

If you're having a full-course meal, each course may be best capped by a particular tea. The Longjin, for instance, goes well with appetizers, while the Dongding Oolong is ideal for meat fish dishes, especially the lemon sauce fish fillet.

The spare Tea of Spring now occupies some belonged to Hong Kong's Che Shangri-La chain's world-famous Chinese restaurant brand specializing in Cantonese cuisine.

In keeping with the hotel's resort environment, however, management made some changes suited to their local resort to make the cuisine more casual and inviting. Thus, Tea of Spring, the only outlet of its kind in the Shangri-La chain, came in season.

And here is it different from its predecessor? For one, portion sizes are no longer traditional. Instead of being meant for sharing, most dishes at Tea of Spring are usually just enough for one person.

Dishes are grouped not on the basis of main ingredient, but on the way they've cooked. For instance, spicy items, whether pork, beef, chicken or seafood, are listed on the same page.

True, of course, are meant to complement main dishes. But what you have to have tea with your meal. Tea of Spring offers other beverages.

Among the restaurant's specialties are Lemon Sauce Fish Fillet with Stir-fried Fresh Lily Bulb Squid, Fresh Green String Bean Noodles with Pork Fried Rice. Prawns with Spicy Fragrant Oats and Braised Black Mushroom Steamed with Tea of Spring Fried Rice.

For dessert, the chef recommends the Chilled Sweetened Black Glutinous Rice served with Boiko Ice Cream. It's best savored in between gulps of free-flowing Monsoon tea.

"Shang Palace is ideal for a very formal," says Stephen Kapok, Shangri-La Makati's executive assistant manager for Food and Beverage. "Here we're a more casual, we thought it make us different in restaurant's look, layout and offerings."

It goes without saying that host parties, as well as walk-in clients, in resort wear are welcome to drink and dine at Tea of Spring anytime.

E-mail the author at cvergara@inquirer.com.ph

STIR-FRIED Prawns with sun-dried longan and pine nuts

DEEP-FRIED Spring Roll with Shredded Yam

Eating our way through Macau

From page C1

One guide pointed out that a huge picture of the late Dodjie Lauriel, two-time Macau Grand Prix champion, and his car were displayed at the racing museum.

Whatever is museum-worthy and ingredients for us when we ended in dinners when most tea-dishes are filled and gave us the English equivalent of Portuguese for tin.

Macanese mix

If you know just a little of Macau's history, you wouldn't be surprised that the Portuguese and the Chinese most in the nation daily. Nowhere is it more obvious than in the noodle shop in the basement of St. Paul's church, down the steps into a winding path around the main square called the Senado.

On both sides of the road are food shops called pastelaria but not exactly Chinese specialties. You will get full if you accept every offer of free samples. Some shops are almost so point cookies, sesame studded with various nuts, ginger candies, dried pork and beef sheets. Many products are cooked on site so you can see how they are done.

We were hungering to buy those goodies right away but our next guide told us we would be late for our next appointment. *We were in* home to drop at the Rua da Garden after visiting the Taipa House Museum, several green colonial houses surrounding the Portuguese cultural canteen and the typical Macanese home.

Macanese cuisine is the meeting of Chinese and Portuguese cooking. And one of the best places serving this is Litoral restaurant, named after a Portuguese province.

The appetizers came, fruited chicken, grilled or pan sauté very much like mussels. Duck fans interested to take it with the water bread and watch it (sweet and good Macau beer. We had pastels de Bacalhau or cod croquettes, samosa indicating some Indian influence (Goa was under Portugal) in the cooking, and shrimp cakes.

If the pigs was our mussels, then the pot of bakidot is our pork

AFRICAN Chicken with Piri-piri sauce

WYNN casino's executive Chicken cooked in almonds with mushrooms

DUCK Rice at the Litoral

GRILLED Bass at O Manuel

binagoongan. The bakidot is the Macau sibling pasta cooked with bay leaves, chilies, lemon, peppercorns and rice wine.

The dish we were waiting to try soon came. All-time dishes has a sauce of pepper, a paste made with ingredients from home: Portuguese calamares, spicy chili pepper from Mozambique, turmeric from China and coconut milk. We learned how to cook the dish a day after, at the Instituto de Formação Turística, Macau's hotel and tourism school. Most of us preferred the version.

Our last main dish was duck rice, shredded duck sauteed in with rice, chorizo arranged on top and then baked.

The desserts were a curious lot. A soufflé-looking concoction with a yellowish sauce was called Molotov. There was also Spanish leche flan (sweet pudding), mango pudding (pudim de manga) and, Macau's favorite, serradura, a creamy concoction with crushed Marie biscuits. It made me smile because it was like one of those dessert concoctions I did not during vacation days in high school.

Restaurante Litoral on Rua do Almirante Sergio has a façade that makes the oceanfront look frustrating pass as Ancestor Chinese + Mandarin joint).

Chinese connection

The choices of Chinese restaurants are many. The Macau Government Tourist Office chose two for us. The Pátio on Rua do Seminário has dishes that are familiar such as Peking duck. But the restaurant went out of its way to present what was usually a winter dish, rice flavored from the simmering of preserved duck, duck liver sausage and the usual pork sausage.

We were also brought to perhaps the newest one in the Wynn casino. A dragon greeted us, sparkling from its nose then 99,999 crystals. We were led to our room through a long hallway. We

CHEF Antonio Neves Coelho

had dim sum treats on many to examine. But we were pointed to the house bestseller, chicken roasted in almonds and served with a tamarind sauce.

Macau has always been identified with casinos. The landscape on the main streets is dominated by the glitzy silver-lined casinos, especially of the older structures. Two stars are mainly Las Vegas branches such as Wynn and Sands. Under construction are the Venetian and MGM.

We had a taste of the Vegas ambience at the Fisherman's Wharf, a theme park with a reduction that opened regularly, and a Roman coliseum. We had our fine-dining Portuguese meal in that area.

Cuisine on Lisboa, Evora, is the newest Portuguese restaurant, named after a 16th-century poet who once were assigned as an official in Macau.

As usual, a visitor week was served right away, a Cantonese-inspired dish with a Portuguese twist. Tender, with an unusual creamy flavor you scooped out instead of cut. I was told it was a soft homemade cheese but my research gave it a name, ricotta, a dairy cheese. There was a non-fried dessert cheese. A lesson: Before I know that's Spanish) was served instead of the equivalent pata negra.

As if there weren't enough, a platter of appetizers appeared with pickled pigs' ears, chicken cutlets, boiled octopus, battered beans with another cheese and deep-fried prawns. This was followed by *sopa de abobora*, a clear soup served with bread and pumpkin soup.

What we all loved was the *arroz de mariscos*, rice with seafood cooked in a casserole, a copper container somewhat like a clam.

Grilled skinned beef was last, an agenda hung on little racks. By then most of us were full. But we were brought to the table.

We thought we couldn't eat the next day after so much food the day before but I surprised myself. Weekend adventure made us all hungry. We went to the Macau Tower whose some of us dared to jump off the 61th floor with cords tethered rubber, of course. Others went for a walk outside the steering area, sites hitched to cables. We repaired to a regular buffet at MGM Grand, a great venue for a relaxing restaurant. Predictably, the biggest were Filipinos.

Farewell champagne blast

Before going to our farewell dinner, we did a bit of gambling at the poolside casino. My slaughtered description of it is drop running after a rabbit, albeit a fake one. One of us decided to cheer for the rabbit instead. We lost about 30 patacas, the Macau currency. We laughed at the dogs' names printed at the racing program (e.g. Emma Chu's Best).

Dinner was at Cokaren island where we visited first the St. Francis Church. The square in front had eating places but none looked like the "restaurante" restaurant we were promised. A story with Chinese in an alley led us to it where the chef was waiting for us outside.

Antonio Neves Coelho led us in his Restaurante Espaço Lisboa (Rua dos Gaivotas). We were greeted by chef-host standing in the entrance. The wine chillers were there already had bottles. There was the soft cheese Assinto for Coelho did one better—the bread was toasted with honey. The salad was the same as what we had at O Manuel.

At last we were having pens soup, the base to equal for most known Spanish and Italian versions. It was sliced not as thinly so it was already filling.

The boneless chorizo in Spanish, cooked and combined with cream and potatoes, breadcrumbs known on top. It was fantastic. For the first time I understood why Serafines knew custard-like dried fish.

The final dish was meats and sausages cooked with potatoes and onions, a dish to share. Another guest, decided should be eaten with rice. To Jude's disappointment that rice not heeded so we had to much carbs than the breads and potatoes.

Then, at last, the egg tarts from Lord Stow's made their way to our tables. Their appearance wasn't the highlight of the meal, but I guess we had to eat them in the place they came from.

Chef Coelho decided to be dramatic by capping the evening with some champagne. For those of us who had gone through real food, good food in four days in Macau, it was a celebratory way to finish the outing-trip.

When he opened each sparkling wine unceremoniously with his mouth, it was indeed a fitting finale and send-off.

E-mail the author at cvergara@inquirer.com.ph

INSIDE Litoral, a Macanese restaurant

Mozart's favorite dishes in Austrian food festival

DINING OUT

MANDARIN Oriental's The Terrace presents an Austrian culinary promotion dubbed "Mozart at The Terrace—The Classic Favorite Dishes." Nov. 6-15, featuring guest Austrian chef Fritz Buergler. The two-week culinary promo will showcase a glimpse of Mozart's gastronomic preferences with buffet spread for lunch and dinner in a splendid six-hand menu of six appetizers, two soups, eight main courses and three desserts. Call 7509888/local 8431/5423.

HYATT Regency Manila presents "Seafood Festival," Nov. 1-21, at the hotel's Sampaguita Mezzanine Restaurant. The buffet is available for lunch and dinner for only P860+. Call 1261234 or 8870818.

TIA MARIA'S offers Baja Baby Back Ribs...a slab of tender baby back ribs marinated in house barbecue sauce, served with browned corn-on-the-cob and fries. It comes with a free pitcher of Manana Iced Tea.

Mactan resort wins top prizes in food fest

THE MARRIOTT ILLUSTRIOUS BEACH Resort swept the top awards at the second Cebu Gourmet Culinary '06 hosted by the Hotel, Restaurant and Restaurateurs Association of Cebu.

The three-day food festival at the Waterfront Cebu City Hotel had three major events: Display Cakes, Live Cooking Competition and the Live Practical Artistic Class. The team from Marriott Illustrious Beach Resort owned by Jude Alegado Vergara got nearly two dozen awards.

Winning gold medals were Marriott's executive Cold Seafood Buffet Platter, LUCIFERed Buffet Platter, Dinner Appetizer, Hot Dish Presentation, Set Menu (cold), Cold Dessert Platter, Pralines, Freestyle Tiered Wedding Cake, Gourmet Cakes and Fruits Carving.

As a team, Marriott got the gold for Table Setting, Chocolate and Bread Showpiece.

In the Live Cooking Competitions, Marriott got the gold in Market Basket Classical, silver in Cooking with Beer and bronze in the Dream Team Challenge.

Marriott got a silver in Fruit and Vegetable Carving, gold in Ice Carving, and bronze in Cocktail/Mocktail category in the Live Practical Artistic Class Division.

Judges were Annie Medero of La Soufflé, pastry chef Jill Sandiego, Jay Gamboa of El Ocho, Brad Reyes, Myrna Bugaoisan of 9501, Bob Avenue Desserts' Buddy Trinidad and cake specialist Peak Ching.

Marriott Illustrious Island Beach is at Marlboga, Mactan, Cebu. Call (6332) 4928100 or (032) 8375752. E-mail: Mrmes.hr@marriott.com

Hotcakes even kids can make

MAGNOLIA PANCAKE MIX

Plus, the first homemade hotcake mix that comes with an assortment of syrups in sachets.

The instant pancake offering from San Miguel Mills Inc. (SMMI), a subsidiary of San Miguel Corporation, can be prepared in a jiffy even by kids. Just add water and pour into a greased griddle to get pancakes that are fluffy and light with a golden-brown surface. Top them with any of the syrups.

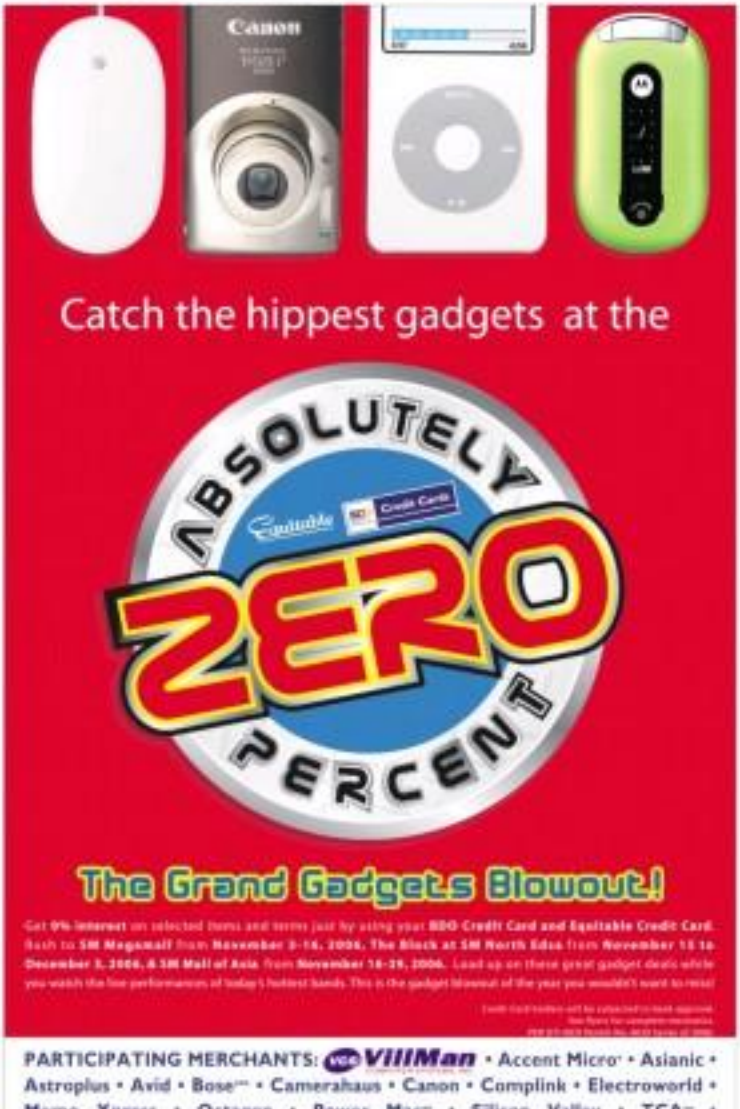
Angelo Gloria, SMMI marketing manager, said Pancake Plus offered taste, convenience, quality, nutrition, variety and value-for-money.

The new product does away with the tedious process of preparing the batter by beating eggs, melting butter, mixing sugar, milk and flour.

Pancake Plus syrups include maple, chocolate and strawberry flavors.

ANNIVERSARY GRILL FESTIVAL

Chili's marks its 18th anniversary with a Grill Festival. On offer are Grilled Steak with Roasted Herb Jus, Sausage and Spuds, Steak Skewers, and Sweet Soy Salmon. Chili's is at Mezzanil corner Meralco Streets, Northeast Greenhills (7273595); Greenbelt 1, Ayala Center, Makati (8180333); and Forest Mortuo, Quezon City (7125051).



Recuerdos: Memorial dishes

COUNTRY COOKING
Micky Fenix

TODAY, ALL SOULS' DAY, WAS TRADITIONALLY the day when everyone visited the dear departed in the cemetery. The day before, All Saints' Day, was when the cooking for the souls was done, my Batcolano friend made it clear.

In her house in Naga, the cooking started indoors. This would mostly be sweets and bibingka.

And so it is for many towns in the country, though no one could explain why only that it's somehow the proper offering to the dead because it's made of the most important staple.

Part of the practice is sharing the rice cakes with neighbors and friends. A friend from Manila and a priest were sent an tray of a small pawnbam plate, a plastic, with a bit of coconut oil spread on the plate so the cake didn't stick. The gift always carried an admonition to please return the plates.

My Batolana friend remembered how the Salisnin was offered to anyone who happened to pass by in the evening of Nov. 2. The light in front of the house was an invitation. People took only what they thought was their proper share, from children to old, early enough from the bowl of candles left for them.

Space for the souls

It was her story of anyone that made me sit up and listen carefully. Made of ground rainsoo soaked in water, the resulting batter is rolled into a thin paste. A piece is wrapped around a funtil, seasoning is completely then removed like a sock and the opening sealed. The empty space inside is where the souls supposedly stay during memorial day.

The unpaire is fried in deep oil. It's cooked when it floats up. When the oil has drained, it's dipped in sweetened syrup that is colored according to the departed for whom it is offered. Light colors are for children and more intense colors, like maroon and purple, are for adults.

Her more than just leftover and anyone are cooked in many homes. Cecilia Amoroso, in her essay "Singalay Food" (*Filipino Food*, April Publishing 2005), wrote that the favorite food of the departed would also be cooked, whether adobo or pancit.

In Dumaguete, the practice is called kalag-kalag. The cook ala inspirational and humba would be prepared, a pork stew with black mushrooms, soy sauce, brown sugar and dried banana flowers (*kamansi*). Of course, in Negros Occidental, the *humbon* or saman wouldn't be missing.

Offering the humba, kalamay or anypan on the altar is part of the ritual. The next day, the offering is eaten by the family.

Inviting the dead

Cecilia's interviewee said, however, she also opened the door and called out the names of the dead, inviting them in to eat.

My family never had such All Souls' Day cooking tradition although we always drove to my father's hometown, Binalong, La Union, to those days, going home for All Saints and all Souls wasn't the practice yet. As the highway was always empty and it was a favorite getaway then.

My ritual ceremony is of tissues with cemeteries on hillsides aglow with light of candles. My aunt mother's (it is one) are reading through the night about her dear departed husband, while her most husband comforted her in soothing words of other husbands he as unacknowledged.

The Day of the Dead always brings to mind an essay by Alan Davidson, "Feast of Cookbooks" ("A Happy with My Tea," Ninth Hour Press, 1995). It's almost a "Rat cuisine of composing a small cookbook of one's favorite dishes before his/her death. Davidson said the books were professionally designed so they became collectible items. He said one Bangkok lady who collected banned cookbooks was murdered by her partner.

I thought the practice was a better alternative to the cramping we give out to friends and relatives during wakes. And so I composed in my mind the funeral cookbooks of my family's dearly departed.

For my father, his favorite dishes will dominate. There will be anchovies pinakbet rather than the tomatoes he had at home. It will also include pinapaitan and the mixture of goat innards and skin with enough bile to make you cringe. It will include, too, blue cheese and crackers of his Confederal days and the thick, rare club of steak with fried onion rings.

My mother's cookbook will have her adobo, her bread pudding, her Christmas recipe of fish in gremin and broiled smoked pothish.

My grandmother's book should have her breakfast oatmeal and puso de bolo.

Thick volume

Because my grandmother had so many specialties, her book will be so thick, it should include her vasse sapon with rice stuffing, her wonderful inabraing pinikba (braised eel), the simple but everyday fish pakrac, the riveting menok, and her breakfast concoction of coffee with carabao's milk and pan de sal with butter.

My father-in-law will have his lomi soup, sliced meats of carabao cooked with blood.

My mother-in-law will have the dishes she taught me—humba, fish escabeche (pakrac with turmeric) and kaldereta without the liver sauce. And it should have a recipe for bonamanche or estofado.

My brother-in-law will have his favorite item, his family's recipe of spaghetti with fat noodles and the most delicious broth.

My sister-in-law will include her Ilocano compliment and the bagoong she did herself.

E-mail the author at pennyfenix@pldt.net.com

Congress staff member is first in food writing contest

AN ESSAY ON AN ENDING RICE cake won first prize in this year's Doreen Gamboa Fernandez Food Writing Award.

Professor Eugenio Lacson, a chief of staff at the House of Representatives, topped the writing competition with "The Undiscovered Twice Steadfast" The rice cake and its accompanying love or syrup was once served only during Lent.

Second place Manila Domestic Comm, a media consultant at Asian Institute of Journalism, wrote about arroz, the simple rice cake of her paternal grandmothers in her hometown of Santolan, Pasig, it was usually served at the patuyan, last day of prayers for a dear departed, or at the Lenten palmas.

Only honorable was third place for "Ning Cai-ing's Heavenly Treats Black," Kapampangan for mapa Hotter, the rice Arroz Cafe in Makati. Her daughter Frecia was first in last year's contest.

Runners-up Mary Bianca E. Coronel, Lilyanne 28871's writer and the only student presentation, wrote on several kinds of asasas ("8 Squares of Sarap"), Corazon was the top prize at last year's Doreen Magsaysay Fame Writing Contest.

Justgen del Sol's Round Table, who works at the provincial office of the Department of Trade and Industry and who wrote about his family's afternoon ritual of custard pudding with *salabat* (syrup topping), never alone his town's balisong maker and her culinary redesign.

Ceresey Pegueta Bergard wrote "The Disappearing Tradition of the Tetsuglos," an Ilocano delicacy cooked in bamboo tubes and made after the harvest season in November through December, a period called Panagdadalon or Bunhayaring.

Prizes are given by the award's sponsor: 4201-CBN Corp., Bobby Castillo, Heritage Foundation, Century Tuna and Argentina Corned Beef, San Miguel Pure Foods, Unilever Food Solutions, Edsa Shangri-La Hotel, Hotel InterContinental Manila, Makati Shangri-La, Mandarin Oriental Manila, The Peninsula Manila, Renaissance Makati City Hotel, Manila Seed Publishing, Cravings, National Book Store and Summit Publishing, Appetite Magazine, Celebrity Recipes, Cook Magazine, F&B Magazine, Flavors Magazine, Food Magazine, and Good Housekeeping.

TRADITIONAL: offering during All Souls' Day is taken to be known as bibingkang malagkit, calukoan or kalamay.

CRISPY: sauteed spicy squid balls

Catering packages

SOPARK KOREAN BBQ HAS launched its catering packages: Menu A (min. 200 pax) at the minimum of 80's and includes soup, appetizer, main course, side dishes, rice, dessert and drinks.

Menu B, at P250++ per head, offers soup, appetizer, main course, sides, rice, dessert and drinks.

Menu C, at P300++ per head, includes soup, appetizer, main course, sides, rice, dessert and drinks.

Soupark Korean BBQ has outlets at the upper ground level of SM Megamall bldg. 5 and ground floor of the Greenhills Strip, Corner Cat Buck Building, Greenhills Shopping Center. Call 5729241 (SM Megamall branch) and 7257547 (Greenhills branch).

Get in touch with your sole

THE BEGGIE ARPERAS School of Culinary Arts will conduct the following classes:

Nov. 3: Deliciously Modern (all sexy)—Seafood Bisque, Modern Roast Beef, Salmon with Blueberry Mushrooms, Madeira and Blueberry Chicken Roast, Blueberry Risotto, Edaguine Tart, cakes

Nov. 4: Side Dish—Stuffed Baked Sole (two variations), Jerk Pecans, Side Parmigiana, Curry Sole Fillets, Crisp Fried Sole, Lemon Sole Sole with Brown Butter, eight delicious sole recipes

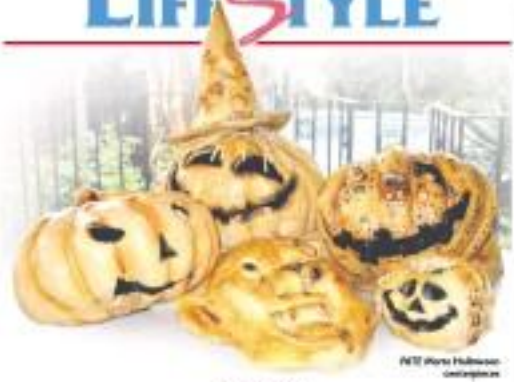
Shawarma, here's the program for the holiday catering season:

Nov. 6: A Thanksgiving Feast (all sexy)—Appetizer Option—Fried Squash Flowers, Sweet Cream Puffs with Seasoned Fillings, Caviar Eggs and Lemon made crackers with seasoned savory dips, Main Course—Beef Entrees of Cream of Mushroom Soup, Roast Maple Brined Turkey with Madeira Gravy and Apple Butter served with Four Cream Sauces Potatoes, Cold Rice Salad with Grapes, Pumpkin Pie with Cream

Nov. 8: Pinoy Holiday Cuisine (all sexy)—Pinoy-style Fruit with Banana Jam, Mango Jam and Shrimp Salad, Pan de Sal Soup Tuscan-style, Oven-baked Crustacean Pockets Entree with Fruit and Vegetable Jam, Coconut Pies, Mini White Chocolate and Hazelnut Cake

Call 9209298, 9237008, 7223691.

LIFESTYLE



PATTY Maria Hallowe'en centerpieces

KITCHEN RESCUE
Reggie Aspiras

Trick-and-treating with 'sculpted' bread

They look very pretty; too bad they cannot be eaten

IN THE PAST THREE years, Halloween's been a big celebration for me. Since the arrival of my son Diego, that is.

This is our excuse to feed him silly but okay over. I am relishing my youth and, even better, I can do it all over again with my son.

This year, my tables were decked with a myriad of Halloween sculptures made of salt dough, also known as pan de sal. Thanks to my friends at Studio, Bene Manalaysay and the bread artists Rolando Bernido, Reyno Mendoza, Reynan Cannon, Herbert Bautista, who worked so assiduously on these playful bread pieces.

I haven't had the time to explore my skills in the realm of bread art. So, this year, I had my contraptions done and I was pleased!

I am sharing the salt dough recipe with those who are artistically inclined and have a pocketful of patience to pursue this as a hobby. Unfortunately, though pretty, they cannot be eaten.

Apart from salt dough, I asked the Studio team to share their recipes for normal, French bread recipes do not. Readers of PDI, who also happen to be serious bakers, have long asked for recipes in commercial quantities of flour.

Studio is the exclusive distributor of kid mixer soap, Cocoa Berry, Bilgar and other baking ingredients and supplies. They also hold consultations and seminars for those who are in commercial baking and those who wish to put up bakeshops but lack the technical know-how. They also cater to serious baking enthusiasts. Call 833.8882, 833.0917.

Salt Dough/'Pase Morta'

Bread flour (70 percent) 1700 g
Rye flour (30 percent) 300 g
Salt (3 percent) 90 g
Margarine (4 percent) 400 g
Water (50 percent) 1200 g
Mix of ingredients until well blended.

Start working on the dough, forming into desired shape or start sculpting.

Let rest 30 min.

When dry, brush with egg wash (1 whole egg + 2 tsp water, beat) or a mixture of cocoa powder and water.

Bake at 120°C for 2 hours.

For extra shine, coat bread after baking, re-brush with egg wash.

Re-bake for 30 minutes.

French Bread

Bread flour (70 percent) 700 g
Salt (flour (30 percent) 300 g
Saf instant Yeast Red (1 percent) 10 g, yeast for dough with no or little sugar
Magnesi Red (0.4 percent) 4 g, bread improver for basic dough to minimize shrinkage
Water (60 percent) 600 g
Combine all ingredients and mix until dough is developed.

Let rise for 20 minutes then cut into 300g portions.

Rest dough for another 15-20 minutes then form into baton (long shape, the shape of french bread).

Proof and bake at 220°C for hour until 250°C bottom heat for about 35 minutes. For regular ovens, bake at 250°C in a regular oven, as you put the dough in, put in a cup of the boiling hot water in the oven to create steam and bake 30 minutes. The steam helps your dough become crusty.

'Pan de Sal'

Sponge:
Flour (60 percent) 1,200 g
Water (50 percent) 600 g
Saf Gold (0.33 percent) 10.20 g, ideal for sweet doughs, i.e.

TRICK AND TREATING D3

FOR HALLOWEEN, Hazel the cutest popcorn machine!

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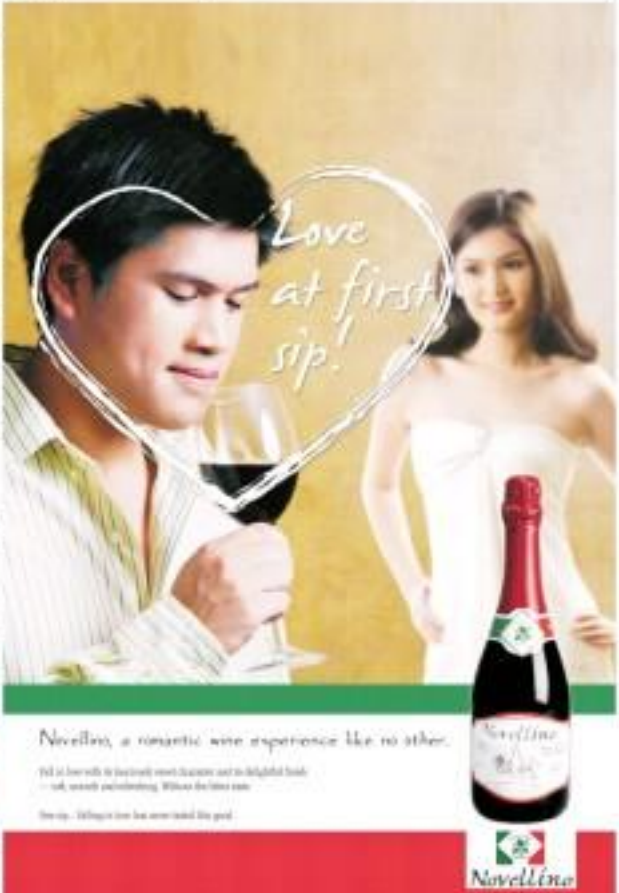

FOXTROT — BY BILL AMEND

A. LIPIN — BY JESS ABAÑA

BABY BLUES — BY JERRY SCOTT

PUGAD BABOY — BY PH JUNIOR

NUTS — BY PATRICK MCDONNELL

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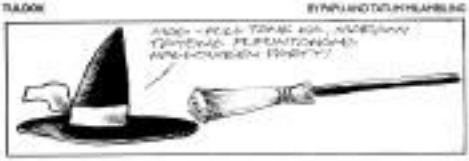


BEH — BY DANIEL SHELTON

DAILY CROSSWORD

HOROSCOPE

CONCEPTIS SU DOKU

Conceptis Sudoku — by Dave Green

9		6						8
	3		9				1	
			7					2
				1		2	5	
			3	5	9			
	5	8		4				
4					6			
	6				2		3	
3						1		9

Difficulty Level ★★★

HOW TO PLAY SU DOKU

Fill the grid so that every column, every row and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9.
Type and program at www.sudoku.com

Answer to previous puzzle

4	9	3	1	6	7	5	8	2
8	5	1	9	2	3	4	6	7
7	2	6	4	3	5	8	9	1
3	4	8	7	9	2	1	5	6
2	1	7	5	8	4	9	6	3
6	8	9	2	1	6	3	7	4
1	7	4	8	5	9	2	3	6
9	6	5	3	4	8	7	1	5
5	3	2	6	7	1	6	4	5

Pinoy 'ihaw-ihaw' goes indoor

LAPIDEA Grill's Crispchon comes with pandan crepes, wrongo, leeks and slices of cucumber, and the kinds of specially concocted sauces.

Text by Pargie Bagsa-Reyes
Photos by Boobi Bunsol

SEN. FRANCIS "KIKO" Pangilinan had the idea for an indoor do-it-yourself tabletop grilling. Enrico "Rikki" Dee had the entrepreneurial skill to turn it into reality.

The result? The three-month-old Lanessa Grill on the ground floor of SM Mall of Asia with a majestic view of the Manila Bay.

"For several years, Senator Kiko hoped with the idea of a restaurant where you can grill or broil your own food in the company of family or friends," says Dee. "He told me, if the Japanese, Koreans and Chinese could grill... on the table and make big money, why can't we? They're not famous for grilling their food but we are. Filipinos love three-hour."

Pangilinan's brother-in-law Lanessa Ocil is usually packed with dinner who seem to have her grilling their favorite seafood and meats. On weekends, it is filled with families and hobbyhopers.

For its pioneering concept, Lanessa engaged Japanese technology. It uses built-in charcoal-based tabletops. Initially they had a problem with the exhaust system's inability to control the smoke.

"Now, we have just invested a huge amount of money for a new exhaust system. Instead of the usual exhaust hood, we have exhaust marbles will vacuum it downward, making your grilling more enjoyable," says Dee.

LAMESA combo platter (lower, right, tulong, blue-marlin belly, squid, chicken leg quarter, pork spareribs and pork longaniza)

Bit of everything

Lanessa offers a little of everything. Seafood in shells (tahong, talaba, sugpo, scallops, squids, oysters) vs. burgers.

Specialties: Ulo a pork' inasal-style BBQ, pork leg marinak, before-barbecue and wrap-up meanut. "It's a platter" roasters of pork longaniza, pork belly, tadyang ng baka, chicken thighs and chicken wings.

Lanessa offers combo platters—all-meat, all-seafood or a combination. The seafood combo from Lemond Suarez City, Mindanao and Bacolod.

One dish that stands out and the owners are proud of is the Kinilaw sa Asin Dagat or rock salt cooking. The fish, either tilapia or apahap (local mullosa), is wrapped in rock salt and grilled.

"This is an old way of cooking fish, introduced by the Spaniards, where are dried have refrigerators," says Dee. "The maple have to, after grilling the fish and removing the burnt rock salt, the fish is out of all-salty, boiled and fresh are very moist like it has been steamed."

Star attraction

Dee, a successful restaurateur who also co- owns Manpuri, Hoon, Cascadilla, Bar and Kitchen, among others, knows that, despite the novelty of indoor charcoal grilling, Lanessa needed other attractions to survive.

Stressing something unique, distinct from what other Filipino restaurants offered, the restaurant came up with Crispchon.

"It's the house dish," Dee proudly says.

The skin and meat of Crispchon, short for crispy lechon, are carved out, chopped into bite-size pieces and served wrapped in thin pandan crepe with slivers of cucumber, wrongo and leeks.

Diners mix-choose from the kinds of sauces: garlic, wasabi-inspired, sweet chili, spicy, pork liver, Rikki's Classic (Soldier-based) and spicy mustard, said to be Senator Cimatu's favorite.

Crispchon skin is so soft, yet crispy and it really melts in the mouth.

"We felt there should be a restaurant of Pinoy restaurants. With Crispchon, you can have lechon in a restaurant without having to order the entire thing... We're so proud of Crispchon: we even patented it," says Dee.

Crispchon is available at Lanessa (tel. 5560935) in different serving sizes. For P3,988, a group can have one whole Crispchon, half (cost P1,450), one-fourth (P760) and one-eighth, P480).

Waiting time for each Crispchon order is only 10 minutes. Lanessa has a high-tech German washer that easily and quickly tenders, grills or broils. "The cooker cost a million bucks but it makes life easier for us in the restaurant," says Dee.

Other items on Lanessa's menu are Tahong with Cheese, Bulakan-La Paloc, Scallops in Garlic Butter, Inihaw-Bahoy, Crispy Tinapa, Baby Mayas, Crispy Pata Sisig, Prawn Tribe. There's also a platter of crispy pancit, lengua estofado, calamares, pitsos, kropeck, crispy wings and pancit.

Desserts include Guinumis, Turbo Banana, Tsoco, Balanchin Butter and Kamias Sorbet.

Lanessa Grill's indoor dining area encounters the ambience of typical Pinoy dwellings in the provinces. Bamboo was used for walls and ceilings, while the overhead exhaust system was covered with nipa. Hagan-inspired wooden chairs have been used.

The place can accommodate about 180 people, indoor and outdoor. The covered floor, suitable for private functions, can hold 25 guests.

Grilling tips

People who don't know how to grill need not fear Lanessa. Dee says they have taken note of the problem and have come up with a solution.

Each table in the restaurant has paper placemats with grilling tips. For instance, dinner are instructed that cubong and lechon are done 30 seconds after their shells open. Sugpo is cooked when it is fully red-orange in color.

Fish, as well as pork, is grilled two minutes on each side. Chicken is done after grilling each side for three minutes. Beef requires cooking for 2.5 minutes on each side, depending on a diner's doneness preference.

E-mail the author at rbagsa@inquirer.com.ph

PRAWTHAWK/Rikki

CRISPY Tawilis with Pakwan

Trick-and-treating with 'sculpted' bread

From page D1

...mixture, pork fat and chicken.

Blood pear with a hint of Rose

Pour till the liquid and mix to dissolve the yeast.

Set aside 1-4 hours.

Dough

Flour (400 percent) 800 g
Sugar (200 percent) 400 g
Salt (1.75 percent) 34 g
Shortening (3 percent) 100 g
Water (55 percent) 440 g
Salt (0.5 percent) 10 g
Maghnes Yellow (0.4 percent) 8 g, bread improver designed to provide softness in bread

Mix dough ingredients first except flour is totally hydrated.

Add (unmixed) sponge and mixture about 3 minutes, then add shortening.

Knead to mix dough until fully developed: then cut to 300 g pieces.

Form into loaves and roll in bread crumbs.

Let rest 15 minutes then cut into 10 pieces.

Place on Silpat and proof until double in size.

Bake at 180°C for 15-15 minutes.

Mango

Bread flour (80 percent) 1,600 g
Soft flour (20 percent) 400 g
Sugar (18 percent) 360 g
Salt (1.5 percent) 30 g
Milk powder (4 percent) 80 g
Whole eggs (10 percent) 200 g
Margarine (6 percent) 100 g
Water (20 percent) 700 g
Gel Gold (1 percent) 6 g
Bloglenda Green (0.4 percent) 8 g, complete bread improver
Mixed all dry ingredients.

Add eggs and ice water to dissolve the ingredients. After 3 minutes of mixing, add margarine.

Mix until partially developed then ferment dough for 1 ½ hours.

Knead until smooth or pass in...ferment dough for 1 ½ hours.

Knead until smooth or pass in...ferment dough for 1 ½ hours.

Knead until smooth or pass in...

CHEF Xavier Anthony Borek

French chef debuts in Manila Nov. 7

GLOBE PLATINUM AND NOVO PRESENT chef Xavier Anthony Borek, reputedly the darling of France's café society, Nov. 7, 7 p.m., at Seasons Courtyard, Makati.

Borek will be the featured chef at Novo until Dec. 7. While here, he will share his cooking expertise and recipes with the restaurant's other chefs. Globe Platinum members get a 10-percent discount at Novo when they dine Nov. 7-Dec. 7.

Borek, a member of the French version of "Queer Eye for the Straight Guy," is also a well-known singer, actor and talk show host. He wrote a cookbook for the party crowd called "Les Petits Dîners de Xavier."

Angus beef has a new 'home'

BEEFS

Hicks's trendy interiors

KENNEDY E. CARRILLO

Saratoga, who did not hesitate to lend his name to the restaurant that has always ranked only the finest steaks—imported, aged in quality, marbling, tenderness, taste and juiciness—has turned over the reins of Hicks to a younger generation.

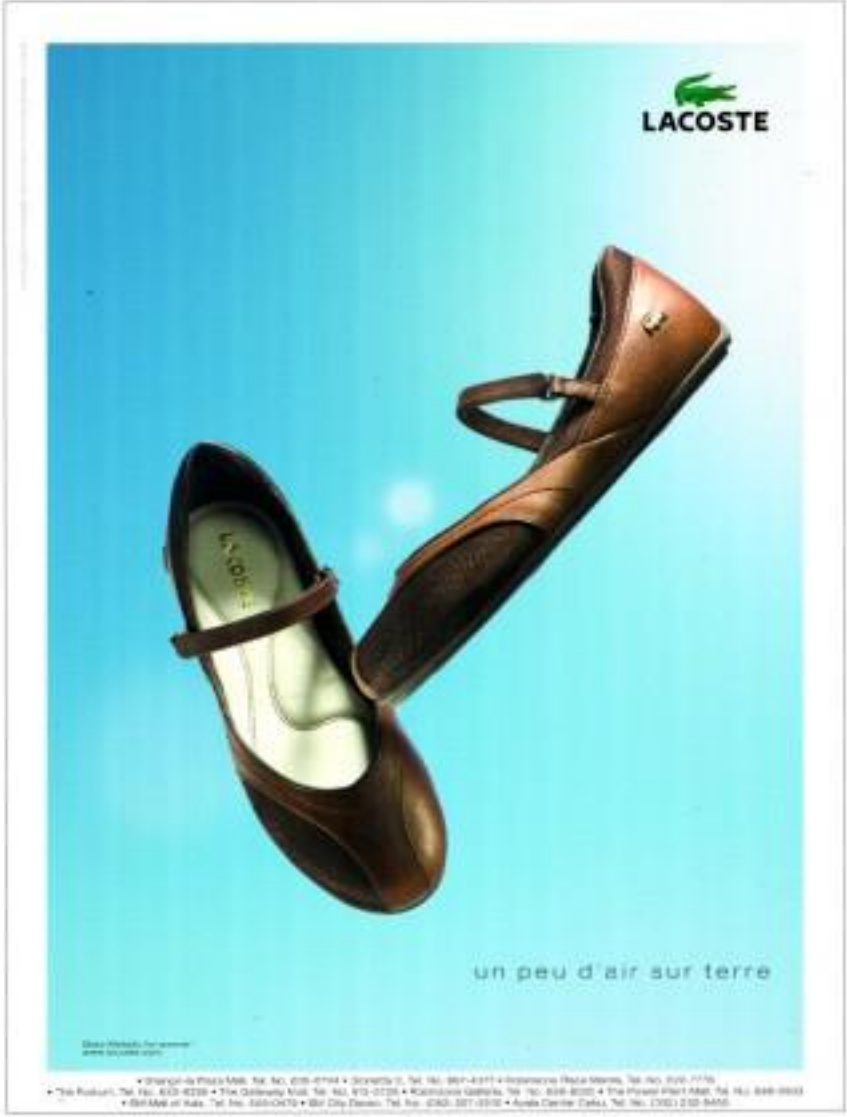
The new cooks on Jupiter Street is Mikkel Ochi (BSHRT, BSHRM) and the one on Sgt. Esguerra Street is Quennie City Cheuking ABE-CBN, with wife Vivek (94-AB) are now being run by his daughters Camilla, Caren and Cristina, as well as son-in-law Neal and daughter-in-law Valkerie.

The ambiance at the Jupiter Street Hicks is perfect for the younger clientele, without sacrificing elegance and sophistication. Muted and red colors accentuate the interiors. The tablecloths are leaf-inspired beiges, with black borders. The dark brown leather seats blend well with the wooden flooring, striped cream and dark brown. There are hot mounting and vivid colors in the mural-sized abstract paintings of Ivan Aquinas, plus soothing lighting and a repertoire of smooth jazz and easy listening background music.

The Certified Angus Beef R.B. Eye has been a longtime favorite of Mirki's regulars. Cut and weighed according to the size of your appetite, it is best enjoyed cooked medium rare. You may also choose the Fillet Mignon for a more premium cut. But don't skip the appetizers. You will enjoy the rich taste of Oysters Rockefeller—fresh oysters baked in hollandaise and mozzarella cheese and topped by crispy bacon chips. Bruschettas are also offered, such as Pan Con Tomate—a harmony of anchovy paste, cheese and tomatoes, and the Mushroom and Anchovy Bruschetta. Of course, the liver pate is an all-time favorite.

For dessert, you will not want to miss the Caramella. Chocolate, a very rich, moist chocolate cake glazed with dark chocolate. The Caribbean Scream, layers of dark chocolate, bananas and raspberry mousse, will also be hard to resist. Schooled at California Culinary School in San Francisco, eldest daughter Cristina also serves sugar free cheesecake lavished with strawberries.

You will find that a diet is not hard to keep with the new developments in Mirki's menu for fourth Beach classic, whatever plate they are in. Mirki's has tucked in to more on lean, gluten, fat-free in a variety of sauces to choose from. And for a boost of protein is the new offering on the menu, the USDA Steak, priced lower but also very tender and flavorful.



Filling soups

SAN MIGUEL PURE-foods Culinary Center has come up with easy-to-do soups in most starters. Light cream or stock.

Check out other new and exciting recipes at www.my-great-food.com.

Warm Soba with Pork

500 g dried soba linsge
6 c water
1 pc dried shiitake mushroom (reg)
4 tbsp dashi seasoning
½ c sake
½ c soy sauce
4 tbsp sugar
½ k Shantaway Pork cabiyaki cut
2 pc onion leeks, sliced diagonally

Cook soba noodles in boiling water until done. Drain and wash with cold water. Set aside.

Bring to boil water, mushroom, dashi/seasoning, sake, soy sauce and sugar. When liquid starts to boil, add meat and turn off heat. Then add sliced leeks.

Place soba in individual bowls and pour soup. Top with meat pieces and some sliced leeks.

Makes four servings.

Chicken Binacol

1 k Magnolia Chicken cubs cut
2 pc large potatoes, quartered
½ c tomato, sliced
½ c onion, sliced
½ c carrots, sliced
5 pc peppercorns
2 pc bay leaves, reserve juice and scrambles meat
Salt and pepper to taste

Place bay leaves in a stock pot. Add chicken, potatoes, tomatoes, onions, carrots, peppercorns and bay leaves. Season with salt and pepper. Boil then simmer until chicken is cooked. Maybe served using the coconut shell.

Makes 6-8 servings.

Makes 8 servings.

ENTERTAINMENT

Lito Emrio G. Peñaflo

An evening of dazzling jazz

By Pocholo Concepcion
Contributor

Every one of the five-piece ensemble led by noted trumpeter Chris Botti was a compelling performer

AN OVERFLOW CROWD tried to squeeze itself inside Cinema 2 of Greenbelt 3 last Saturday to catch a sneak performance of jazz trumpeter Chris Botti. Amazed by the virtuosity and dynamic interplay Botti displayed with his four-piece band, this audience would very probably become his devoted fans.

Botti's CV is very impressive. In 1990, he was in Paul Simon's band which went on a 11-month world tour. Botti sharing the stage with such top session players as Randy Brecker, Richard Tee and Steve Gadd. After releasing two solo albums and a collaborative effort with the Irish ambient pop group Blue Nile, the Portland, Oregon-born Botti was chosen by film composer John Barry to perform solo parts in an orchestral piece. Botti himself composed and performed the score for the film "Cought."

Studio work with Joni Mitchell and Natalie Merchant further widened his reputation. But as the main person responsible for pushing his career, Botti would acknowledge Sting, who enlisted him in 2000 as featured soloist in the Grand Hotel Tour/Sacred Love tour that lasted two years.

Botti has since recorded five more solo albums containing both original and cover material.

Acute sensitivity

In the Philippines, Sony BMG Records has released three of these CDs, namely "Seven Days" (a Christmas album recorded in 2002); "When I Fall in Love" (2004); and the latest, "To Love Again."

In these recordings, notably the last two, the listener may detect an acute sensitivity that transforms, for instance, the hint of sadness in a love song into something clearly emotional. When Botti plays a bittersweet melody, the moving dogleg of surrender and letting go so impressive a much-approved.

One doesn't even have to be a jazz freak to appreciate Botti.

In the Greenbelt gig, all that did was sit back and let the beauty of heartfelt music bring joy and energy into our being. The eloquently dressed, ruggedly handsome Botti never gave the impression that his being the lead performer made him the sole star attraction. The minister the band began to play, we realized what Scott meant when he stated toward closing the press interview: "Watch every guy in the band. The show is never boring."

Guitarist Mark Whitfield dazzled with his red hollow-body axe, his fingers work as quick as an ant-eater, never missing a chord even as he played with twice-wide abid.

Pianist Billy Childs, a Grammy-winning performer, rolled out notes from his baby

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2 BOA	7 WORLD TRADE CENTER
3 CAKE	8 THE GUARDIAN
4 KALELDO	9 OPEN SEASON
5 THE MARINE	10 TILL I MET YOU

ERMITA

1 THE MARINE	
2 THE PRESTIGE	6 THE GRUDGE 2
3 BOA	8 WORLD TRADE CENTER
4 CAKE	7 KALELDO

METRO EAST

1 THE MARINE	6 THE GRUDGE 2
2 BOA	8 WORLD TRADE CENTER
3 CAKE	7 THE PRESTIGE
4 KALELDO	5 OPEN SEASON

NOVALICHES

1 THE MARINE	3 THE GRUDGE 2
2 KALELDO	4 THE PRESTIGE

CITISQUARE MALABON | PIONEER

1 DEAD OR ALIVE	1 THE MARINE
2 TILL I MET YOU	2 BOA
3 RESERVE	3 OPEN SEASON
4 RESERVE	4 THE GRUDGE 2

STA. ROSA | LIPA

1 THE BANQUET	1 OPEN SEASON
2 BARNYARD	2 PULSE
3 THE TEXAS CHAINSAW MASSACRE	3 FLY BOYS
4 TILL I MET YOU	4 AMERICAN SOLDIERS

DASMARIÑAS | ANGELES

1 THE BREED	1 MY FIRST WEDDING
2 THE PRESTIGE	2 WORLD TRADE CENTER
3 BARNYARD	3 BARNYARD
4 FLY BOYS	4 THE GRUDGE 2

IMUS | STARMILLS

1 THE MARINE	1 EMPLOYEE OF THE MONTH
2 THE GRUDGE 2	2 WORLD TRADE CENTER
3 KALELDO	3 BARNYARD
4 DEAD OR ALIVE	4 THE BANQUET
	5 THE GRUDGE 2
	6 TILL I MET YOU

BACOLOD | ILOILO

1 THE GUARDIAN	1 THE GUARDIAN
2 DEAD OR ALIVE	2 WORLD TRADE CENTER
3 PULSE	3 TALLADEGA NIGHTS
4 TALLADEGA NIGHTS	4 THE BANQUET
5 POSSESSED BY EVIL	
6 OPEN SEASON	

ROUNDUP

Travel series

FIVE TRAVEL JOURNALISTS selected from a pool of more than 4,500 applicants from Asia Pacific will make their way around the United States in a new season of the Discovery Travel & Living series "I Video USA."

The journalists will travel to Las Vegas, Alaska, Washington DC, Orlando, Miami, Memphis, New York City and Austin to create a film that encompasses their experiences on their journey.

Episodes of the eight-part series premiere on Discovery Travel & Living on Nov. 4 at 9 p.m.

Mobile Callalily

It's pop group Callalily calling at Sony Ericsson and boys R&B team up to bring the music of the new hand-straight to the Philippines phone.

Sidekick phone models W580i, W700i and W800i with the promotional sticker come with Callalily ringtones and a special acoustic version of its hit single "Jesus."

Each purchase also come with the band's debut album, "Destination 8521" and Callalily poster for free.

The promo is valid until Nov. 30.

Five W800i Walkman phones will be given to satisfied buyers who purchase specially marked Callalily CDs from Odyssey outlets.

Club culture

The Goethe-Institut Manila, Fourwaters Technologies and Starzon present Dion Hermawan in Manila for "El-Manila Underground" on Nov 11, 9 p.m. at Expose's, D.F Prime Plaza, Makati St., Salcedo Village, Makati.

The Goethe-Institut regional project explores DJ and club culture in Southeast Asia, Australia and New Zealand with Edo from Germany.

A DJ, producer and remixer Hermawan will be in Manila from Nov 9 to 12. He will conduct an international remix workshop on Nov 11. "Room interested may call 4178676 or email goethe@skylink.net.ph."

'Sahara'

BASED on Clive Cussler's best-selling novel of the same name, the Matthew McConaughey-Penelope Cruz-starrer "Sahara" airs on Star Movies on Nov. 5 at 9 p.m., with replays on Nov. 10, 11, 18, 19 and 22.

Box-office flop

LOS ANGELES—The provocative film "Death of a President," which imagines the assassination of George W. Bush, bombed at the North American box office with a measly $201,000 grossed from 143 theaters in its first weekend.

The pseudo-documentary played at 91 US theaters and 53 Canadian ones over during its first three days of release, averaging an estimated $1,975 per screen, according to Box Office Mojo. Newmarket Films, which reportedly paid $1 million for US rights to the picture, Reuters

Lesbians in real world still can't fight back

By Kara Leah Sarabia
Contributor

REVIEW

I USED TO HEAR THE ELDERLY IN MY FAMILY say that a man who converted to Iglesia ni Cristo would be spoiled because she would convert him hand and foot, and that a man who married an Ilonggo would be lucky because she would take care of all his needs.

As I was born and raised in urban Manila, I didn't see the difference until after I observed hard and long enough. In truth, no one can blame these new Philippine provinces pampering their wife Jessica, just as one can blame those every time exchange health, pleasure and hours for the welfare of her husband and children.

Pilipe Brillante Mendoza's "Kubrador" is about these Batangas sisters, their father, their lovers, and the traditions that shape their lives. It is also about how Filipino women struggle to find their own humanity inside the suffering that women passively accept—and conditions—definitions of them.

The characters could have easily drowned in to melodramatic, hyper-dramatized stereotypes. But they instead reveal to the viewers deeper meanings to relief against patriarchal agenda—Germaine Tallao, brutal husband, exploitative tenancy-lender—that unfortunately cubicles them. The combination of hard-work, weddings and homecomings are contrasted with Rhoda's rituals of Lent, the colors of both happy and gray times punctuating women's lives.

One would forgive some of the stylized references to nature because they provide the settings of time and field.

There is obvious control over images, but they flow precise, from a direction to love with her subject. Perhaps this is also why we feel no additional sensitivity to the gender issues that interplay with surrounding performances.

Cherry Pie Picache as Rita, the battered lunch, is stunning The more she tells is so common, one sees

does rule; lesbians in the real world still can't find the courage to end their oppression.

And yet, for all its heroines, it is a tragedy. The film cannot change in a simple resolution. Because in "Kubrador"—as in our lives—homophobia, gender inequality, violence against women and girls are stories into the social fabric that surrounds us, and which we have great difficulty getting out of. We will have to stop admiring that bleeding beauty if we want one day for her to ugly, horrible scars.

CHERRY PIE PICACHE Screening

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Nov. 05 Lipa • 6-9pm Cinema Lobby
Nov. 11 Metro East • 6-9pm Cinema Lobby
Nov. 12 Angeles • 4-9pm Cinema Lobby
Nov. 14 Cinema 8, Imus • 6-9pm Cinema Lobby
Nov. 18 Galleria • 6-9pm Mall Activity Area
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"The bottom line is that if it's a good story and you get involved, it doesn't matter what format it is"

Cell Phone Movie-Making 101

BOSTON—THE CAMERAS CAPTURE THE young man walking down the aisles, reciting a monologue about the three things people should know about him. His favorite movie is "Gone with the Wind." he loves roller coasters and hates people not taking him seriously.

Then, as the camera zooms in and makes several attempts to pretend that there's no big camera equipment, an expert sound operator and an army of film technicians measure.

Instead, everyone involved, from the three cameramen and the sound guy to the extras, is pressing the minuscule screen with—and here's still photo—a cellular instrument.

The exercise is part of a new Boston University class created through a unique partnership with cellular company AmpCell Mobile and taught by director Jon Egleson. During the semester, the students will produce a series of short episodes that will be distributed by the company's service to cellular customers.

The class offers students credit and a chance to be part of the new media culture—where anyone can create entertainment using a variety of emerging technologies, despite hurdles by getting mobile content created by one of its target audiences: Tech-savvy young adults.

AmpCell, whose backers include Quadcomm Inc. and Viacom Inc., is competing with multichannel cellular players like Cingular Wireless by branding itself as a youth-oriented company offering more than just phone service. It sells comedy clips, cartoons and music videos for subscribers to watch on cell phones for prices that start at 4$ cents for a single download to $20 for unlimited access.

A real outlet

AmpCell has hired established writers to create original content, but Seth Cummings, AmpCell Mobile's creative vice president for content, said the company decided to work with BUto target budding artists.

"I know (that when I see) these, there were like stuff that we'd create that there was no outlet for," Cummings said. "There's a real outlet here."

The students is to say, the students and Egleson spent some time in a recent class debating what to call their work. Options included mobisodes (mobile episodes), mobisodes or cellisodes (cellular webisodes).

"We're on the cutting edge of a new sort of film medium," said Mark DiGiovanni, a 21-year-old BU film student. "Why not get on that train, you know?"

Television production graduate student Chris Miller said cell phones give young filmmakers a new way to distribute their work.

"It's so hard to get the studios to really pay attention, especially the beginning filmmakers," Miller said. "So if they don't want to go that route, you know? Sure to."

"The bottom line is obvious: And if it's a good story and you get involved, it doesn't matter what format it is," said Egleson, who has directed film-and-television shows.

Other times, though, the students and teacher was into challenges unique to working under three-inch, shiny cellphones provided by AmpCell.

• The phones film for just 15 seconds at a time. For longer scenes, such as the monologue in the classroom, multiple phones are used.

• The phones don't edit any sound well. During that class, the students try putting a phone in an artist's pocket or using a makeshift boom covered with a clay mixer, phone and a bandana, green cloth.

• In some scenes, camerawomen can be seen in the shots. So when they finish filming, they quickly put the camera to their mouth and become crime reporters reporting on the phone.

The picture quality isn't as good as film, either, because the phone's camera records 15 frames per second, compared with the typical 24 to 30 frames per second in movies or on television.

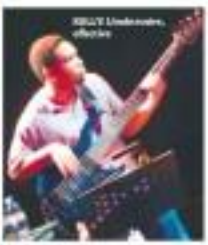
More flexibility

Miller said the students also have had to adapt their film-making style for the very small screen. Scenes are shorter, cuts are quicker and closeups are longer.

On the other hand, Egleson said, the phones give the camera more flexibility because they aren't lugging around large equipment and can easily whip a phone out of their pocket for spontaneous scenes.

The 6 recently held its second festival devoted exclusively to movies shot with cell phones. But it's not exactly to say how popular mobile programming will become in the US, said Linda Bernabeo, analyst at Yankee Group, a Boston-based technology research firm.

But Bernabeo wouldn't rule out feature films watched in segments—or even attracting older people, who have more buying power than young ones. Which is exactly what AmpCell Mobile wants to bets. Melissa Trujillo, AP



An evening of dazzling . . .

From page E1

grand in sweet, gilding fashion.

Alternating between electric and acoustic upright was Jazz player Mark Kelly, whose time-keeping was unobtrusive, yet effective.

Drummer Billy Ciken was an awesome revelation. He was like different persons at various moments, pounding the skins the way a basketball player dribbled the ball—or a fast break, and then striking the cymbals like a chef whipping up ingredients with his knife. In several instances, he seemed like an octopus, because the lightning speed by which he rolled down beats was way too much for somebody with five arms.

Gracious host

The band seemed to own identity, whether interpreting Miles Davis ("Flamenco Sketches"), Leonard Cohen ("A Thousand Kisses Deep") Stevie Wonder ("Isn't She Lovely") or the late Dottie Rizal ("Cinema Paradiso," among other surprising numbers in the repertoire. And as in any legendary jazz ensemble, the members excelled in operatic performances, each one marked by instinctive knowledge of when to go full-throttle and when to blend.

Bass was a gracious host, approaching each musician and facing them for close interaction, and often stepping off center stage for the other players to take the spotlight.

Hughes, he met the members of the audience individually—as approaching DJs, posing for snapshots and actually chatting with several of them.

To the end, the satisfied spectators came away looking like they had successfully washed off the worries of the day, like they had also engaged in some wonderful play.

ENTERTAINMENT

New rule shatters 2 dreams

Eliminated 'Idols' say fans were unprepared

By Marinel R. Cruz
Photos by Rudy Esparcia

SUPPORTERS OF JELI MATEO and Arnis Cruz, the fourth and fifth contestants to be eliminated from ABC 5's singing talent search program "Philippine Idol," have complained of the new two-hour voting system imposed by the show's producers.

Producers Formaxmille Media and ABC 5, announced on Sunday night that instead of the usual 24-hour voting period, the audience would be given only two hours to vote for their favorite contestants.

The procedure is similar to that of the various "American Idol" and the original "Pop Idol" in the UK, said abc 5's Creative and Television Production head Wen Tolentino.

"A lot of people resented [negatively] to the change. Because we weren't forewarned, not all of my supporters were able to vote within the two-hour period," Jeli told Inquirer entertainment.net Monday. Some of them said it was unfair, that I was shocked, that the judges should have given them at least a week

ARNIS CRUZ: "I've relieved that it's over."

JELI MATEO: "I'm more sad than relieved."

to prepare. We were caught off guard."

Arnis agreed: "It had a huge impact on the results. Too many households in Zamboanga (where she hails from) own TV sets. Most of them just watch the shows on the big screen in the town plaza. Some of them were home after watching our performances...I was the second contestant that night—hoping to send their text votes on the morning. I depend heavily on the text votes from Zamboanga and other parts of Mindanao."

Inviters explained that the decision not to inform the contestants of the change was part of the "dynamics" of the show. "The program becomes more difficult that way," he said.

He added that during a meeting with the contestants on Sunday afternoon, he suggested that they all get their supporters to watch the show because "something big would be announced."

In the end, Chi was still half-managed to say: "I've nothing against the new policy. Mukhang galot lang talaga. I guess God has other plans for me.

"I think this is the worst part of being on Idol," Arnis said. "It's the reason I'm no longer in the competition."

What emotions are you feeling more strongly right now—one you can't or relieved?

JELI: I'm more sad than relieved. It's the end of the line for me. I wasn't ready to go yet.

ARNIS: Both. I'm sad because I know it's not the right time for me to go. I started feeling afraid for myself when my friends Raymond [Bajao] and Dear [Warden] were booted out. Every week, I would feel tense. It's not a nice feeling. So I'm also relieved that it's over.

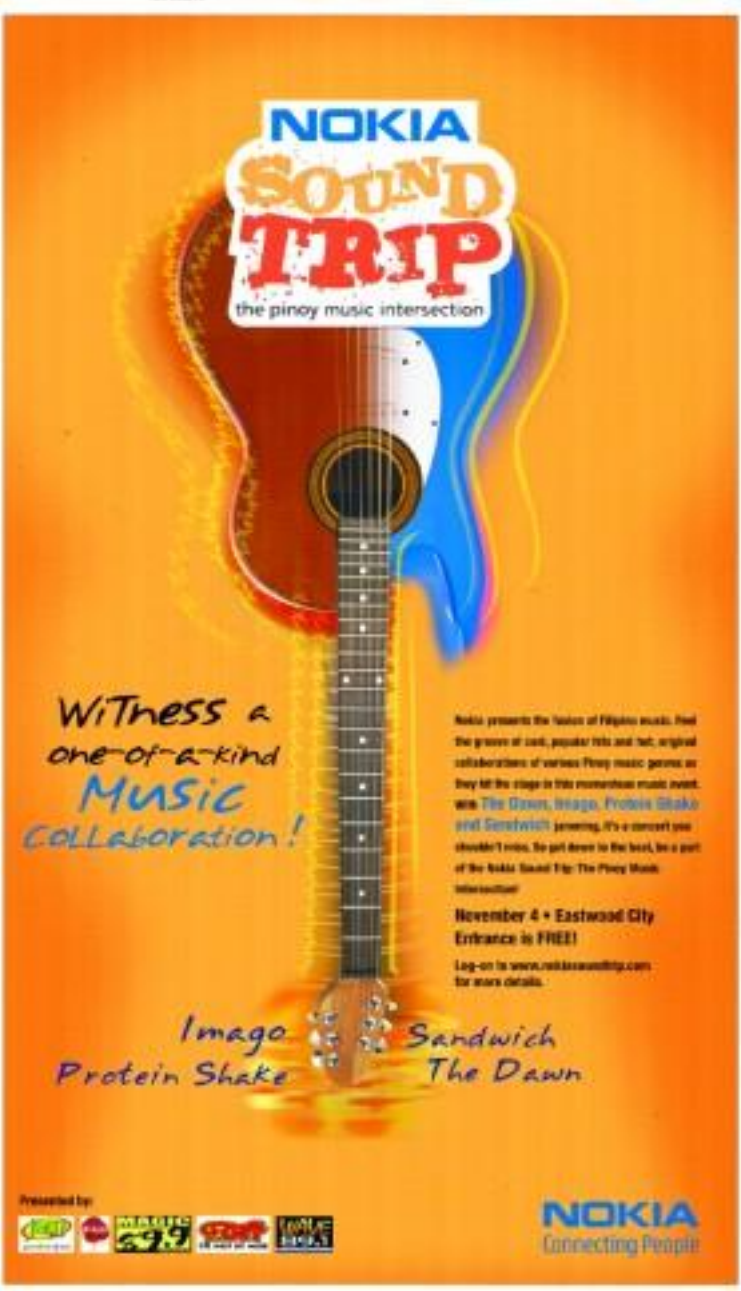
How far did you think you'd make it in the competition?

JELI: Honestly, I didn't think much about it. When I auditioned at the PICC and passed, I told myself to take each day as it comes. Just always did my best and hoped my supporters would take me some place good.

ARNIS: I hoped to be part of the Top 3. Actually, that's what many people predicted. Classic's ratings. It's really up to the voters. It was enough for me to get good reviews from the judges each week.

NEW RULE P2

BOTTOM four finalists Apple Chia (left) and Pow Chavez on elimination night.



Interesting glints of irony in new 'teleserye'

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

CHANNEL 23 (HBO) rightly says, "Magna Sine Ea Vita," is an interesting show because it's created just to showcase Jinkee Pumaren and Jean Garcia, two actresses who would have it, none of the usual star treatments (singing, dancing).

As viewers of the teleserye know, the couple are played by Dina Bonnevie and John Lloyd Cruz as one hand, and Jean Garcia and Joel Molina on the other.

They didn't start out that way. When the series started telecasting some weeks ago, the characters played by Bea and Sam were simply in love and reveal flawed.

So the other hand, John Lloyd longed for Bea and Sam's heart beat only for Jean.

Did not mind it, they were the solid people out, so they were miserable, while Bea and Sam loved it up.

So, what happened? Well, as the series' writers imagined it, Bea was kidnapped by John Lloyd's brother, was instructed/ thought to have died in a car explosion, was rescued by John Lloyd, was stricken with amnesia, and was taken by John Lloyd to a remote cabin, where he introduced her to everyone in his wife.

The bittersweet bun, tired to act the part, and found herself falling in love with him, for his part. John Lloyd loved and cherished her but kept his passion in check because he felt guilty, since it was his lover her who had swallowed only Bea to this tragically low point in her life.

Shipwrecked

Just recently, however, Bea found herself at a school where Sam's ship just happened to be docked, and he was waiting for Anne to visit him. Talk about coincidences. As tell-tale coincidences would have it, none of the two knew that Sam's ship was at the end of the school.

But his part, after Bea's character "died," has become terribly depressed and pensive, thinking of everyone in sight and saying like a combination of Simon Legree and Democrat Scrooge. Anne still loved him but he couldn't explain Bea to her lover—would they ever look shipwrecked.

Alone on a deserted island, they ripped and ripped at each other until Sam fell ill from a jellyfish attack/ sting, and Anne had to help him. Sam, thinking she

(Well, that's TV luck—anywhere on global television, no show can exceed perhaps two "big twists.")

However, even after this big (but inherent) moment, gravely Sam still didn't fall for Anne (out of gratitude, at least).

What an underlying end.

As indicated by this brief summation of the show's plot thus far, the Bea-John Lloyd subplot has more going for it than the Jean-Sam relationship's much more divulged development.

Clueless 'advances'

The Bea-John Lloyd story has some interesting glints of irony, like the fact that John Lloyd loves Bea desperately but is distrait about not knowing that clueless "advances" to notice she has amnesia and he feels guilty about her having ended up in such a sorry state.

The playing, while occasionally wildly forceful, is also potentially significant because it could go into the thematically valid direction of the rich, powerful and snooty (Bea and Sam's characters) being humbled by what's happened to them, and thus unwittingly been given valuable new perspectives.

Trouble is, the melodramatic twists and turns keep draining us this way and that, so it's hard to get and keep our bearings.

We also note that, in terms of screen time, the Anne-Sam subplot is now behind the other couple. In addition, there's language problem keeps slowing his scenes down, and his performance is too one-note and limited (he's only two years of the later). He should lighten up and learn to speak Pidgin as soon as possible.

For her part, Anne is able to balance the hide & vulnerability aspects to her character, but Bea figures in more comic. She's the wiser balance here, after all.

PAULEEN LUNA

KSHANA REEVES

HANSAIAH SOUZUER

LORNA TOLENTINO

Jeremy-Alex breakup final

► IT'S HARD ENOUGH FOR JEREMY MANGUES to recover from his split-up with Alessandra de Rossi. What makes matters worse is that some quarters are dragging Toni Gonzaga's name into the picture. To right, "Hahahahaha! Isa Toni. Pinilit niyang kunin ang mga kaibigan ko dito. I don't want our friendship to be ruined because of this issue. It was a mutual decision. Even if I still want to patch things up, I have to respect what Alex wants. The last text I got is 'Let's not speak to each other for now.' I'll keep on praying that one day we will be strong. Ang sikap na kung pwede, I'd love to be best friend."

DOLLY WOOD
Dolly Anne Carvajal

Just a few months back, they were excited after announcing their relationship with their fans, gifts and promises on national TV. But this time around, their breaking is final. Many lovers can't resolve the art of war, then, the best gift they can give each other is to let go.

► Producer Jamie is all agog by her debut as Sex, Lies and the Audition's Sexy Star. Ready on her big day? The blushing birthday girl reveals, "All I can say is be bitin[g] me pa rehearsal I'm with him. Only nurses, hospitals, taxi crew or parents lol. When I came home from Hong Kong, he surprised me. When I got home from the airport, he gave me flowers. Then he gave me another one when we were sitting. I don't mind even if he has kids. I'm excited to meet them. They look so gorgeous. Partner-perfect manner in the making! Will Marvin's lost make-a-bilat showing in the debutante's ball?

► Blogging Dimples charges off rumors that he is romancing anti-Kapuso in on the rocks. To her, we are planning a trip to Disneyland with the family this Christmas." He also ignores nasty rules that he's a flop kung. The "Idolanora" star wasn't shy over that. "My kababayans ay mga bruhos noon." In the dark or some world of drama he, Dingdong rocks ang mga sikat.

► Maegan Aguilar is an ecstatic new mom. "I gave birth to our Dr. 16. My baby boy's name is Enzo Ferdinand. Ferdinand ang talagang pinilit ng aking ate Claire Zuzo si Bb. Mr. Bubby Aguilar's first grandchild. Still the proud kid, he inquired to everyone's name of his legendary hit song "Suck" and call it "Sper."

► Is Lorna Tolentino going to replace Gina Pareno as Angel Locsin's mom in "Mmo-Mo If?" Mo D has looked out due to health reasons. If true, Mongolian beauty actor but nothing's definite yet. Kinuwento ni Lorna, "Ang sabi ko, *dumaan pa yan.* Hindi *finalize* noon (laughs)." Mother's unpredictability is often makes loved ones his nerking. How on is unsure, "Bwisit, ang!?"

► Ruffa Gutierrez going to explain Gina Alajar's absence in Angel Locsin's movie in "Mmo-Mo If?" Mo D has looked out due to health reasons. If true, Mongolian beauty actor but nothing's definite yet. Kinuwento ni Lorna, "Ang sabi ko, *dumaan pa yan.* Hindi *finalize* noon (laughs)." Mother's unpredictability is often makes loved ones his nerking. How on is unsure, "Bwisit, ang!?"

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biggest masquerade of all!

Radio show's 8th year

Kevin "Bellum Gadly" Duran and "Kimpot" Jon, Feed Lisa offer genuine public service to the few Filipinos on this fund radio show "Marcos Ignorant" every dedicated. They are more ears to help-

ing indigents get on operation, get real good medical assistance and other means possible to own lives, in their program lasts tonight, the No. 1 radio personality of the whole country has to all their powers.

Post-Halloween treat

Sorry (some) late treats a-falling at the box office, led by Star Cinema's "Goldie." Now producers are at it again with "Hiwaig Kang Lihiqon," a post-Halloween treat full-devoted to two of the country's finest young directors. The first episode "Dyna" is directed by Quark Henares and stars Anne Curtis and Marvin Agustin. It's about the mysterious double in a hospital room called Angel of Mercy. The second episode, "Talisman," is directed by Jerry Sineseong, starring Kristine Hermosa in a girl forced to be the breadwinner of the family after her dad abandons them. In the old house where they move into, she finds a mirror that changes the course for that she and her family will be killed.

E-mail to star.inquirer@yahoo.com

ALESSANDRA DE ROSSI

Oasis, Arctic Monkeys, U2 honored at London's Q music awards

LONDON—Oasis, the dour Mancunians, U2 and 1980s icon Boy George picked up honors at the Q Awards for music on Monday.

Oasis were named "best act in the world today," while Arctic Monkeys won the people's choice award and Boy George received the "Inspiration" award. People Say I Am That's What I'm Like," Readers of Q magazine chose the honorees.

Irish rockers U2 got the Q Award of awards" and The Who received the "legend" award." Peter Gabriel picked up a lifetime achievement award and Boy George—who came to New York's streets in August to publicize his latest album—was given the "Q Icon" award for "Culture Club 1980s hit "Karma Chameleon."

"I'm so glad to get this award because it means you were recognized again as a singer and not a cross-dressing," he said in the awards ceremony at London's Dominion Home Hotel.

Sinéad Robinson, honored for his outstanding contribution to music, said he was touched by the honor.

"To know I have had some sort of an impact on your lives throughout it is incomprehensible," he said. "This has been my childhood dream." AP

New rule shatters 2 dreams

(Turn page 11)

drama, you're one of the judges' favorites. We're you surprised to be eliminated?

ARMI: Yes, honey, I've been getting signs all week. *Ito talaga ang pahiwatig ko.* On Saturday night, I took deeds told me, man, I went to some [something] color. It's my favorite color so Alex, the world's theme had us singing the song of our lives. At least I was able to share my life struggles with the viewers through my song. I've no more regrets.

What's next for you after "Idol?"

JILL: The first time I got eliminated, I was not ready to get. I got so much of myself in "Idol," but I'm now open to other opportunities. I'm excited to [because] what God has prepared for me. I certainly met people who asked whether I was interested in hosting, modeling or anchoring on TV.

ARMI: I've got a couple of offers from recording companies. I'm still studying them. I'm busy right now with my new "Philippine Idol" album. I'm also considering accepting bookings. So you heard it here and here.

Jill, was there any setback from the judges that you felt was unfair?

JILL: I think it was what Mr. C said about my voice being the weakest among the female contestants. You see, we all differ in our singing styles. I think Mr. C was basing it mostly around the low or forceful [singing]. But since that's not how I sing, Mr. C probably thought I wasn't working hard enough.

Not many know that I suffered from laryngitis and phlegmitis. My condition affected me a lot. It's like when an athlete has a sprain. He injury needs time to heal. I'm not in my best voice. I sing with difficulty. But I know what I'm capable of doing with my singing voice. I'm getting better. That's why I was hoping to continue on with "Idol."

ARMI: I'm using my condition to an advantage. I'm still figuring out what I can and cannot do with it. But really, hearing a doctor's diagnosis is a sign of courage is not enough to completely judge him to courage.

What did you have to give up to for "Idol?"

JILL: I used to do night lounge shows a week. During this contest, was a big gamble for me, especially because I'm the breadwinner in my family. It's stressful in a way, my finances got strained. I've not been working for three or four months now. All I did at one will feel close to "Idol" for three more months so we really can't do anything [to] We get all [contracts] are for tomorrow.

ARMI: A lot. I turned down an offer to work as a singer in Hong Kong. I also had to fly away from my family and just up my love life [laughs].

What aspect of your performance do you think improved after joining the competition?

JILL: I learned to be more patient. Before, I used to work alone. I would get tense. I manage to lounge and just sing what myself. I missed my time. Now, I went a lot. We all get tired of training.

ARMI: I'm now more confident with myself. I'm more flexible. I'm also open. I don't think I'll ever feel

(Turn page 11)

What's the best and worst part of being on "Idol?"

JILL: Let's start with the worst first. We lose time spent with family and yourself. We change, you tend to forget who you are before you whole thing started. The best part is that you come out of it a better person. You learn a lot, you discover who are your friends are, and get good inspiration, ideas, are made in God gave strengths and I became closer to my family.

ARMI: The best thing about "Idol" was getting friends. I now have a new family.

Now that you're out of the competition, who do you think are the new contestants who likely to fight it out to the end?

JILL: After going through the process, it's now hard for me to predict. This contest is not just about talent, but also about luck. We have to be able to charm the audience. I think Mr. C and the Philippines like to be someone with a strong character, who carries himself well under extreme pressure, and who inspires the youth.

ARMI: I'd rather not say what's on my mind. The voters never learn anyway. Many asserted when it was time, I asked the audience to vote wisely. All I said was, if they sweet candy, quietly who were Raymond and Dina. We have really good singers, this season of!

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G1	1 THE SPIDER'S	2 THE MARINE	3 [illegible]	4 HAUNTED
G4	1 CLOSED FOR RENOVATION	2 CLOSED FOR RENOVATION	3 CLOSED FOR RENOVATION	
	4 MARIE ANTOINETTE	5 CARS	6 THE MARINE	7 THE PRESTIGE
GB1	1 THE PRESTIGE	2 THE MARINE		
GB3	1 THE PRESTIGE	2 THE MARINE		
	3 THE GRUDGE 2	4 MARIE ANTOINETTE	5 CLOSED FOR RENOVATION	
ATC	1 THE MARINE	2 CARS		
	3 THE PRESTIGE	4 WORLD TRADE CENTER	5 THE GRUDGE 2	
ACC	1 THE DARKNESS	2 [illegible]	3 BARNYARD	4 TALLADEGA NIGHTS
M2	1 THE MARINE	2 [illegible]		
	3 HAUNTED	4 THE GRUDGE 2	5 CLOSED FOR RENOVATION	

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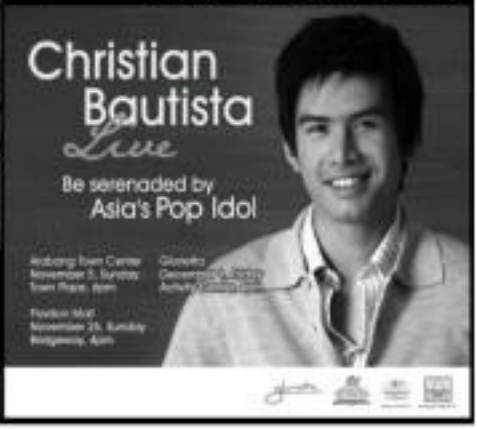

Reese and Ryan break up

LOS ANGELES—OSCAR WINNER Reese Witherspoon and "Flags of Our Fathers" star Ryan Phillippe are separating after more than seven years of marriage, their representatives said on Monday.

Witherspoon, whose marriage reportedly had been on the rocks for some time, is the latest Best Actress Academy Award winner to suffer marital woes. In January 2002, she divorced Oscar winner Hilary Swank split from husband Chad Lowe.

Their publicists said in a joint statement. "[Reese and Ryan] remain committed to their family and we ask that you please respect their privacy and the safety of their children at this time."

Witherspoon, 30, and Phillippe, 32, reportedly met at her 21st birthday party before wedding together on the 2000 film "Cruel Intentions." They married in June of that year and have two children, 7-year-old daughter Ava and 3-year-old son Deacon.

The publicists gave no more details about the split but the celebrity Web site TMZ.com, which broke the story, reported that Witherspoon has contacted the divorce lawyer who represented Jennifer Aniston, Kimberly Rice and Lisa Marie Presley.

TMZ quoted one unidentified source as saying the breakup was not triggered by any single event but rather by "cumulative" circumstances. Reuters

RUSHES

PHILLIPPE and Witherspoon call together earlier this year.

Brad builds houses

HOUSTON—Hollywood star Brad Pitt has joined former US President Jimmy Carter in help volunteers from a Christian charity build houses for the poor in southern India, the organization said.

Pitt, who is in India with partner Angelina Jolie for a film shoot, dropped by the tourist town of Cuttack on Monday to briefly lend a hand to thousands of volunteers from Habitat for Humanity.

Photographs showed Pitt, wearing a white shirt, dark jeans, goggles and a baseball cap, facing a wooden grill with gloved hands.

He spent about half an hour working under the hot sun and talking to volunteers, newspaper reports said.

The actor and his partner are spending a month in the western Indian city of Pune shooting for "A Mighty Heart," a film about American journalist Daniel Pearl who was kidnapped and murdered in Pakistan in 2002.

Pitt is producing the film while Jolie is playing the role of Pearl's wife. Reuters

She's hung too

PISOM PISOL Cambodia—And Angelina Jolie has set up an irish-produced Cambodian orphanage as an addition to a conservation project for rescued moth-eaten, scrawny of the economy, the director of the rare group said Monday.

John Lonsdale, director of the conservation group Wildaid, which had co-managed the project, in December said Stephen Rogers, executive director of the Maddox Jolie Project. The rare group is named after Jolie's 6-year-old son Maddox, who was adopted from Cambodia in 2002. AP

BRAD PITT plays construction worker in real life.

WHITNEY HOUSTON

Rocking again

LOS ANGELES—For the record time in three days, the Rolling Stones have postponed a concert so that singer Mick Jagger can rest his voice, the band's spokeswoman said on Monday.

A new club appearance scheduled for Tuesday at New York's Beacon Theatre has been delayed by a day so that ailment-hit 63-year-old Jagger's vocal cords recover, according to a statement.

Jagger also left Spanish fans in the lurch in August when the band canceled two shows due to his case of laryngitis. Reuters

Feeling great

NEW YORK—Whitney Houston, who has announced her split from Bobby Brown after a tumultuous 14-year marriage, is stepping out at her own women.

Houston, 43, was recently spotted in the Hamptons with Dr. Phil McGraw, Oprah Winfrey's business, told People magazine reported Monday on its Web site.

"I feel great," Houston was quoted as saying, while Davis, one of Sunday evening's honorees, told People: "We're going to make a killer album." AP

WILLIAM

Same ol' stuff

LONDON—British rock band The Who is back with its first album in 24 years, but guitarist Pete Townshend said on Monday that the music was just the "same old stuff."

Townshend told Reuters in an awards ceremony in London: "I never thought we'd get another Who album. I don't think Roger (Daltrey) did either." Townshend and lead singer Daltrey are the only two survivors of the original lineup, which included the late Keith Moon and John Entwistle.

Asked whether the new album was another set of re-recordings by a veteran group, Townshend replied: "I'm writing the same old stuff about the same old situations." Reuters

Michael and a Pea

BUSHEY—will Lion of the Black Eyed Pea can count the King of Pop

The only thing worse than sitting through a bad movie is standing through one.

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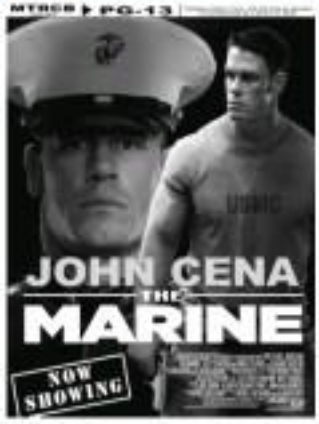

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